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# **THREE GENERATIONS**

**THE HUNGARIAN COLONY  
AT STOCKHOLM, SASKATCHEWAN  
CANADA**



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# THREE GENERATIONS

1901 - 1957

## THE HUNGARIAN COLONY

AT STOCKHOLM, SASKATCHEWAN

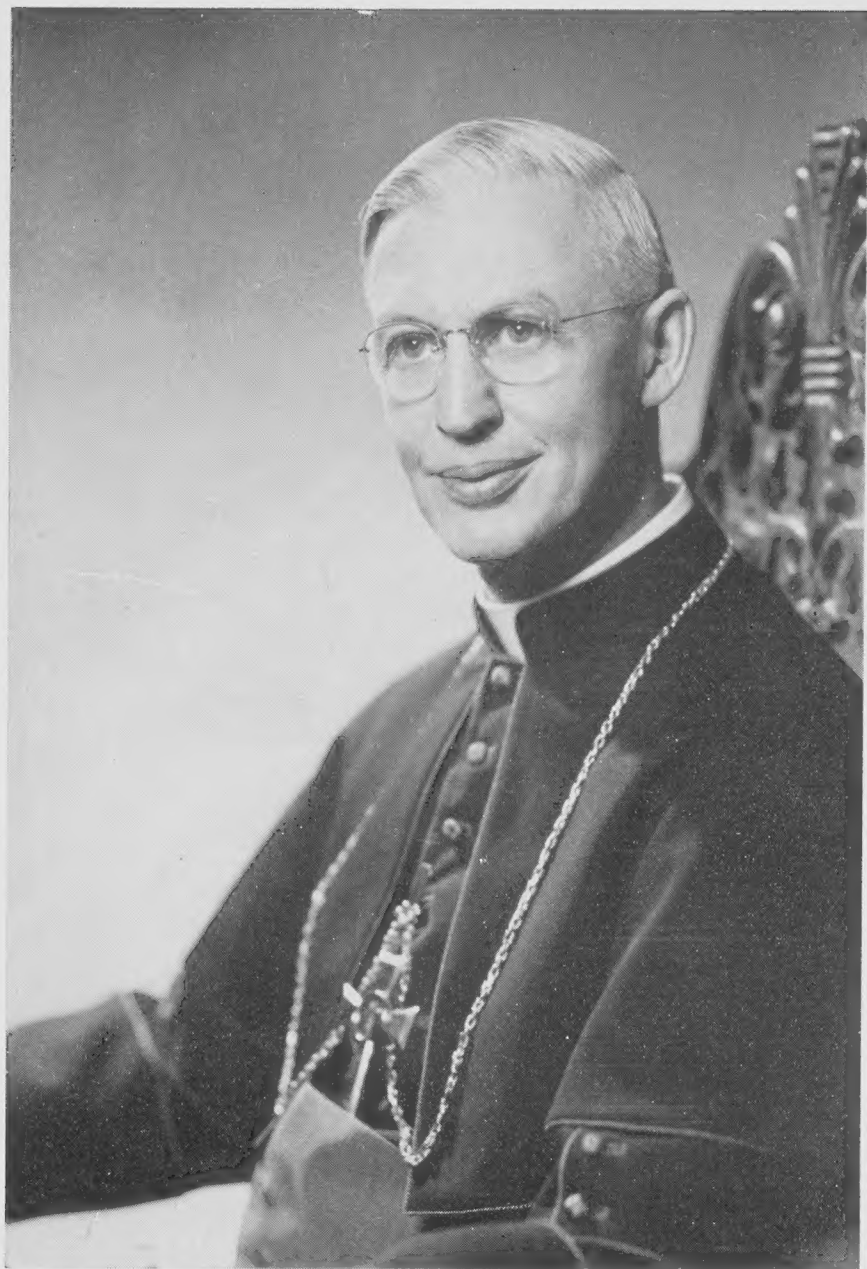
CANADA



By

Paul Santha, D.D.

*Respectfully dedicated*  
*to His Grace*  
*Most Rev. M. C. O'Neill, D.D.*  
*Archbishop of Regina*



**Most Rev. M. C. O'Neill, D.D., Archbishop of Regina**

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# Contents

Foreword .....	6
<b>I. The Background of the Settlers</b>	
Country of Origin .....	9
Migration to North America .....	12
On Way to the Unknown .....	15
<b>II. A New World and a New Life</b>	
Arrival in the Promised Land .....	17
The Beginnings of a Settlement .....	19
<b>III. Cultural and Social Progress</b>	
The First Generation .....	23
The Second Generation .....	30
The Third Generation .....	37
<b>IV. Building up St. Elizabeth's Parish</b>	
Laying the Groundwork .....	42
Building for the Future .....	47
A Cultural and Social Centre .....	54
<b>V. Construction of a New Church</b> .....	65
Description of the New Structure .....	69
<b>VI. Events and Census of 1957</b> .....	76
<b>VII. Organizations and Their Work</b>	
Sisters of Social Service .....	79
The Catholic School .....	83
Women's Auxiliary .....	85
<b>VIII. Appendix</b> .....	90



## FOREWORD

**T**HE village of Stockholm, the centre of the colony bearing the same name, is situated in the East Central part of Saskatchewan province, north of the Qu'Appelle Valley, approximately one hundred and forty miles east of Regina, on a branch line of the Canadian Pacific Railway and on No. 9 provincial highway.

It is an undulating parkland district, its soil is a mixture of black and chocolate clay with an average of three feet productive soil, well suited for wheat production and cattle raising. The district, closely surrounding the village of 230 population, is densely inhabited by farmers of Hungarian origin. One third of the people live to the south, two thirds to the north; the majority within six miles of the village, while some are as far as ten or twelve miles.

The railway station and village received their names from the Swedish pioneers who settled south of the Canadian Pacific Railway line in 1886 and in this way wished to honour their mother country. Fifteen years later came the first settlers from Hungary and before long they surpassed in number the original colonists, so that today the village would rather deserve the name of Budapest. The Hungarians are fond of pronouncing the name of Stockholm as "Sokhalom", meaning "many hills" which is the dominant feature of this part of the country.

This colony, numbering 130 families (with 550 souls) is a smaller group settlement and still retains a character of its own in religion, mother tongue, cultural and social traditions; in fact it is the most solid and best organized of all Hungarian rural groups. It has one of the finest churches in the province, constructed in contemporary style and treasures a unique memorial banner of outstanding artistic value. Its importance and influence as a Hungarian centre has reached far to other districts even in Eastern Canada through the activities of the Sisters of Social Service. This religious community settled in Stockholm in 1923 and expanded to other centres, helping to lay the foundations of national parishes in the cities of Montreal, Toronto and Hamilton.

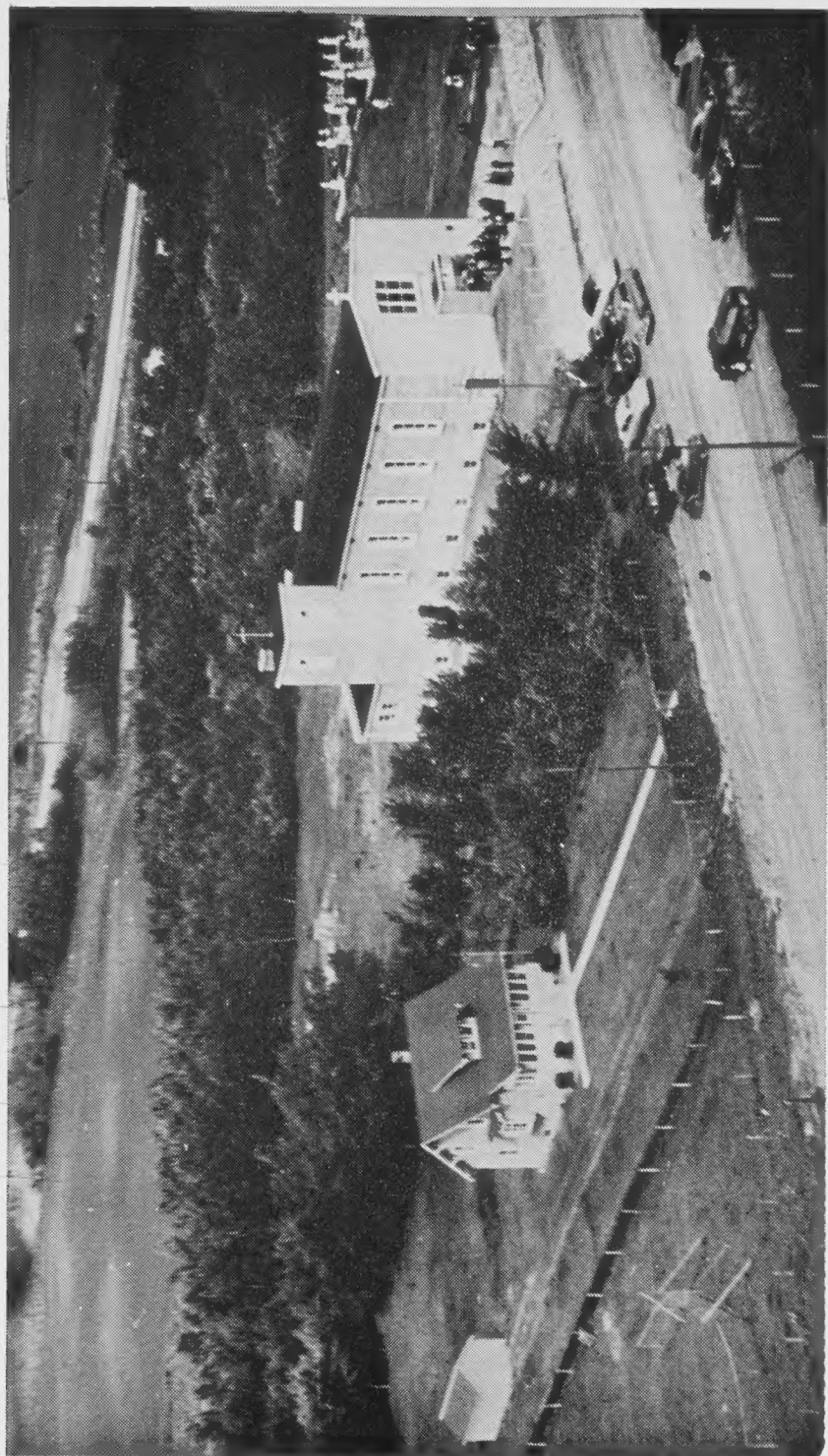
In recording the past, less space is being given to material expansion than to cultural, social and spiritual progress; presenting the history, as it were, of the soul of the colony. Thus the story serves also as a monument to the achievements of the pioneers and their families, comprising three generations in a period of half a century. It tends to chronicle the community accomplishments as



an organic development and seldom mentions names of families or individuals.

As in every group, there were some centrifugal forces at work, disruptive rather than constructive tendencies. These are touched upon very briefly and related in only one or two instances. Consequently I would term this booklet as the settlement in its "Sunday" best. Some day, with more leisure, I may write about the ups and downs, the cares, difficulties, trials, problems and disappointments, which I would call a "weekday" history.

The compilation of this retrospect was preceded by a painstaking research. In compiling and preparing the manuscript I received valuable assistance from the Sisters of Social Service, to whom I wish to express my sincere thanks. If some errors have crept in concerning the names, dates and evaluation of events, I ask for the indulgence of the reader. It is better to write and publish a book even if it is not complete and perfect, than to have no book at all. In this attitude I follow the advice of John Henry Newman, who said: "Nothing would be done at all, if a man waited till he could do it so well, that no one could find fault with it".



The New Church and Rectory

## I.

# The Background of the Settlers

### Country of Origin

**T**HE Hungarian settlers of the Stockholm district migrated from thousand year old Hungary, called the Kingdom of St. Stephen, in the early years of the 20th century.

Until the end of the first World War, Hungary comprised not only the fertile plains of the Middle Danube river basin but also the surrounding mountainous regions. These mountains closed the country off from its neighbours to the north, east and south, but left it open to the western world, of which Hungary was a part in every respect. It was an almost ideal geographical unit. At the turn of the century it was part of the dual Hapsburg monarchy, enjoying equal rights with Austria, and having the same departments for external affairs, defence, customs and currency. All the other departments were separate and independent in each country. Austria was preponderant with her manufacturing industry while Hungary, the granary of Europe, was mainly agricultural and the producer of raw materials. Her population of more than 20 millions included various social and language groups. Of these the Hungarian (Magyar) ethnic group was the largest and oldest; therefore, its tongue was the official language of the country.

The Hungarians, or Magyars, are a distinctly different group from the other Europeans. Originally they came from the Turanian stock, but are now a blend of various races through intermarriage. Their language is similar to the Finnish and Esthonian, with a highly developed literature of its own.

This extreme Western branch of the Central Asian peoples, and the last wave of the migration of nations, settled in the Danube Valley on the great plains about 896. A few years later their first King, Stephen, completed their conversion to the Christian faith, a task begun by his predecessor. He, with the approval and consent of Rome, organized the Catholic Church in his territory and brought the blessings of civilization to the heretofore nomadic tribes and united them into a strong nation. He is rightly called the apostle of Hungary, as St. Patrick is of Ireland and St. Boniface of Germany.

In the course of history the nation demonstrated its loyalty to the faith of its first king, the great majority remaining faithful up

to the present. Hungary played an important part in the European history of the Middle Ages, and won a glorious distinction as the defending bulwark of Western Christendom against the inroads of the Turks. Janos Hunyadi is one of the greatest heroes who saved Christian civilization 500 years ago, in 1456, by defeating the enemy in a decisive battle and paralyzing its power for seventy years. During the wars of the succeeding two and a half centuries, this country sacrificed her best sons and material resources in order to check the expansion of Islam in Europe. For 150 years almost half the country languished under Turkish domination.

It is highly regrettable that the Western powers did not show their appreciation of Hungary's heroic sacrifices when she needed help most; notably, after the first World War in which she had sided with the Central Powers. According to an American author, William Henry Chamberlin, "the treaty which Hungary was forced to sign in Trianon was the most brutal, unjust, unintelligent and sadistic dictate ever offered by supposedly Christian nations to a group of fellow men". She may be regarded as the greatest loser of all the defeated nations, losing more than two thirds (70%) of her former territory and 63% of her population to the neighboring states. Even Austria, her ally in defeat, obtained a slice of the spoils. She lost her access to the sea, her mountains, forests, mines, coal, iron ore, precious metals, her finest cities, historic shrines and churches. As a result she was confined to the lowlands and her defences were reduced to a tiny police force.

At the same time she was subject to all kinds of humiliating controls and vindictive interference. Moreover, of the population ceded to the neighbours, three millions were of the Hungarian language group, rated by their new masters as second class and undesirable citizens.

After the Second World War she fared even worse. The country was invaded by the Russians and ever since has been under Communist domination, in a state of terror and slavery. Erroneously called a satellite nation, she is actually an imprisoned, captive country, deprived of freedom, elementary human rights and even the necessities of life, ever in danger of being gradually exterminated in spirit and body. To-day, more so than ever, mutilated Hungary is a burning spot on the body politic of Europe, with her people at home or in exile abroad crying for justice and liberation in the name of Christian civilization, democracy and freedom, for which history's two most devastating wars have been waged.

Though humiliated and suffering intensely under the burden of unjust and cruel peace dictates, and the heels of the red slave drivers, the Hungarians within and without the iron curtain are more resolute than ever to recover, with the help of Providence,

Undivided Hungary as she existed for the last thousand years.



Hungary as mutilated by the Treaty of Trianon.



BEFORE TRIANON		AFTER TRIANON	
AREA			
125,609 Sq. miles		35,866 Sq. miles	
INHABITANTS			
20,686,487		7,481,959	

Hungary before and after the first World War

their lost territory, their exiled brethren, their human rights and freedom. Despite their tragic history they are not paralyzed but work with determination, self denial and optimism to bring about a brighter future for their country and their descendants.

### **Migration to North America**

The tide of immigration from Hungary to the North American continent commenced in the early eighties and reached its peak between 1900 and 1910. Most of the immigrants went to the United States where they settled in the manufacturing centres and mining districts of the East and middle West.

Although an overwhelming majority of these new arrivals had been agriculturists in their country of origin, they did not, as a rule, continue farming in the New World. Farmers of Hungarian descent are few and far between. Large agricultural communities formed by them do not exist, in spite of repeated efforts made during the past five decades. This may be due to the fact that the immigrants were poor, penniless people who had not sufficient financial resources for efficient farming.

An objective never attained in the States, except in scattered and comparatively small settlements, was achieved in Western Canada, in the prairie province of Saskatchewan. The oldest of these colonies and still thriving, is Kaposvar in the Esterhazy district, founded in 1886 by a nobleman from Hungary, Paul O. Esterhazy. This became the mother colony of a number of Hungarian groups in the East Central part of the province. If it had not been for Kaposvar, it is doubtful whether the neighbouring Hungarian colony in the Stockholm district would be in existence at all. But we shall return to this detail later.

The reasons for emigration from Hungary were of an economic nature: e.g. periodic slumps in farming, manufacturing and mining industries, seasonal unemployment, hard manual labor, low wages, heavy burden of taxes, compulsory military service. In addition to these there were lack of opportunity to buy land because of large holdings of a privileged few families and institutions, and lack of credit to help the ambitious worker to stand on his feet, resulting in a lower standard of living than in the more industrialized Western Europe or North America. An aspiration to possess property of one's own, a veritable land-hunger, was felt by small holders and by the dwellers of the lowlands who were employed as renters, share croppers, farmhands, day labourers on the estates of the more prosperous. Even if they made good and attained a modest level of satisfactory living, there was no future for their large families. Their attachment to and love for the soil was second nature



THE SILVER JUBILEE  
MEMORIAL BANNER

1928

donated by the  
Hungarian Government





and they dreamed of the possibility of saving enough to enable them to become landowners. When at last they decided to emigrate, they seldom visualized making their permanent home overseas. For centuries their forefathers and ancestors shed their blood in the defence of the Kingdom and it was considered unpatriotic, almost treason, to leave for good the country of their fathers. 'You have to live and die on the soil of this country'. This was a recurrent idea in the literature, a message taught in the schools. Up to the end of the first World War the public authorities frowned upon emigration and tried to discourage people from such plans, considering the emigrant a loss to the national economy and military defence. Since they could not remedy the situation, the authorities had to face the facts, reluctantly grant licenses to well established steamship agencies and issue passports, although literature soliciting immigration was banned.

Emigration to the U.S. had been already flowing in mighty waves while there was still a great deal of prejudice towards Canada. The possibilities of the great West were unknown and permanent settlement on the land was considered an obstacle to a return to Hungary. In the decades from 1880 to 1900 the immigration to Canada was negligible. It began to rise in 1901 and during the first decade of the century the total number of arrivals recorded was 7457. The largest influx was in 1903, numbering 2074.

What were the influences that turned the attention of would-be immigrants to Canada? It was pamphlets published by steamship companies, especially one booklet entitled "Esterhaz Magyar Kolonia. Eszaknyugati Tartományok Kanada". (Esterhaz Hungarian Colony N. W. Territories) Ottawa, Government Printing Press 1902. The latter in 84 pages gave some general information on Canada and brought accounts of progress by successful farmers, together with pictures of their farms. But more important than these were the letters of Kaposvar farmers to their former compatriots, relatives and friends, as well as personal visits by settlers to the homeland. One of these, Mrs. Steve Gyuricska, deserves special mention. She paid a visit to Ormezo in the county of Szabolcs and by her vivid accounts of the way of life in the Great West made a lasting impression on her listeners in the neighboring villages of Tornyospálca, Littke and Lovo. From there the news spread to the more distant Nyirkarasz and beyond the boundaries of these districts to the counties of Heves and Bereg. To these land-hungry people she spoke about the free homestead of 160 acres, with its fertile black soil. She described the grazing fattened cattle, the groves of poplars providing building material and ready fuel, the low level of taxation, the great freedom enjoyed by all, the great open spaces for hunting, the lakes for fishing, the abundance of meat and white

bread even on weekdays, making each day of the year like an Easter Sunday in Hungary.

### **On Way to the Unknown.**

Many people were eager to emigrate and try their luck in the New World, but they were firmly attached by sentimental ties to their country, accustomed surroundings, social atmosphere and traditions.

It took time, deliberation and effort to break the old ties, obtain passports, and what was more important and difficult, the necessary funds for the passage for the whole family. Emigrants, as a rule, had to dispose of their few possessions. Only a fraction of them had any finances left to start with in the new country. The ticket from their hometown was in the neighbourhood of 140 forints per person, a small sum in itself, but quite an outlay for people of very moderate means.

No wonder that only fathers of families of younger age groups, in their twenties and thirties, were courageous enough to venture into the uncertain and unknown. There were hardly any over forty years of age. They took with them their loved ones, for the family bond was too strong for them to leave their children behind. They were proletarians in the original sense of the word; the children were their most precious possession. Next in order were their prayerbooks, devotional articles, some household utensils, garden tools and a few pieces of choice wearing apparel, embroidered handworks, as souvenirs of the past.

Of the families who were to settle in the Stockholm district, less than half a dozen left for Canada from various parts of the lowlands in 1900 and 1901. The movement was unorganized and accidental.

The first large contingent from the above mentioned villages in Szabolcs county, having all the marks of an organized emigration, was assembled by a representative of an ocean steamship company at the Fenyéslitke station on March 9th, 1902. These were to become a year later the founders of the Hungarian colony. There were approximately 35 families, numbering about 160 souls and of these, 14 families planned to reach Kaposvar, via Whitewood, in Saskatchewan (called Assiniboia at that time) on the Canadian Pacific transcontinental line. The group was directed through Budapest and Vienna to the Dutch port of Rotterdam. Here they boarded a small boat for Liverpool, England, where after a delay of almost two weeks the passengers were transferred to an ocean going steamer, Lake Ontario of the Beaver Line Company, apparently a vessel more fit for scrap than for a long voyage.

The accommodation in the steerage was below decent standards in every respect, as it lacked the conveniences of private or family cabins. There were no beds, the passengers slept on the bare floors of the common rooms. Food was insufficient and unpalatable, in a way new and unattractive for these people who never tasted seafood or preserved meat. Even bread was handed out in small rations. Some passengers were fortunate in bringing along extra provisions before embarkation, which proved to be a great help for a while. The service was a "Serve yourself" type, without tables, plates and spoons. The unusual fare and the continuous vibration of the shaky boat caused much inconvenience, hardship and sickness. Some of these people almost regretted their decision to leave their native country; others firmly resolved never to board a ship again.

After a trying passage lasting more than twelve days, the safe landing at the Canadian port of St. John, on April 14th was a well deserved relief for all. At last they enjoyed some rest, bought more satisfying food and could use the facilities of the colonist cars. They looked forward with curiosity and hope to the long journey. Their mood was soon changed to depression and despair when crossing Northern Ontario with its rocky formation, vast forests and lakes. Some of the immigrants began to have doubts whether they were victims of deception, brought here under false pretenses. But their hopes revived after entering the great plains of Manitoba which resembled the lowlands of their country. Several times during their trip as soon as the train stopped for a few minutes, the men would rush out of the coaches, scratch the ground, and get samples of good black earth to the great satisfaction of their fellow travellers. Thus the trials of their long journey and the uncertainties of the future were forgotten.



A field of golden wheat

## II.

# A New World and a New Life

### Arrival in the Promised Land

**T**HE train arrived at Whitewood on April 19th and the weary travellers were greeted in their mother tongue by friendly people. Every arrangement was made to make them feel at home and comfortable. They needed this attention the more so, since most of their money was spent. A few of them had a couple of hundred dollars hidden on their person for a start in the new land, but most of them had only one or two dollars in their pockets, others owed money to friends in the group, who helped them out during the trip. Of those who came to meet the new arrivals, we may mention two men whose assistance is still remembered. Rev. Kalman Kovachy, a Presbyterian minister who was to direct the settlers of his faith southward, to the Bekevar colony. Similarly, Emery Pinke, one of the earlier pioneers in the Whitewood district, took care of those heading north to Kaposvar.

Food was supplied to these people and the women took charge of the cooking in the open, camp style. A number of arrivals were picked up by Kaposvar farmers who had come to carry their friends to the colony. Others were put up temporarily in the empty Creamery building till transportation was available. Rev. Kovachy did his best to keep up the spirits of the adults, and to make the children happy by giving away some spending money.

Over the thirty miles from Whitewood to the Colony the newcomers had plenty of time to observe the country and ask questions. To those coming from densely populated Central Europe it looked like a veritable no-man's land, with farm homes few and far between. They were surprised to hear that Kaposvar was not a village or hamlet, but a name for the Church and the Post Office. They were shocked to notice that the fields looked two months behind time compared to those in their former country. There the wheat was well above ground in late April, while here it was just being seeded. On their arrival they were cordially received by the older settlers, some of them relatives and friends, others complete strangers. Soon they could verify what they had heard about this settlement: the extensive land holdings, great number of livestock, plentiful food. Only their houses, furniture and other buildings looked primitive, and lacked the comforts of even modest homes.



**A group of first settlers.**



**A group of women in spiritual retreat**

They heard from their hosts stories of struggle and success, and now the opportunity was close at hand to make even better progress than the first immigrants. All they had to do was to seek work, earn some money and occupy the free homestead lands as soon as possible.

It was not difficult in early spring for the men to find work with the farmers here and in the neighboring districts. A good number were employed on the Canadian Pacific branch line that was being extended westward and this meant most needed ready cash. While the men were away, the women helped with the housekeeping, garden and field work. At times accommodation was difficult in the overcrowded homes, so that the new comers had to move to an abandoned older building or use the granary, at least in summer time. Almost all the new Canadians spent their first months with the Kaposvar people, an indispensable help for them and a mark of fraternal charity on part of the older colonists. Willingness to help and the spirit of cheerful giving was more active in the pioneering years than later in the times of prosperity.

With a view to securing homesteads, the men under the experienced leadership of Steve Pilchak and Joe Smerekowsky, went on an exploration of the lands not yet taken. They would wander about in groups for days till they were satisfied with the location or forced to stop because of food shortage. As for shelter, at night they used to rest in the bush. The nearest free homestead lands were north west of Kaposvar and north of the existing New Stockholm Swedish Colony. This part of the country was not much appreciated by the former settlers, and those in search of new land were discouraged from settling on these lands as unsuitable for wheat farming. Despite objections, the nearness of the existing Hungarian colony was more important for them than the quality of the land they intended to claim.

They had to go to the Land Office at Yorkton to make applications for homesteads. It meant sixty to seventy miles on foot, but they were happy to be able to acquire a land of their own for a registration fee of ten dollars. After this procedure all they had to do was to put up a modest house, buy a yoke of oxen, together with essential implements and tools, start breaking the new land. At last their long cherished dream was coming true.

### **The Beginnings of a Settlement.**

It is a fact that a few pioneers had been already on the land in and around Kaposvar and Esterhazy, who later joined the Stockholm Parish or moved to the new district in and after 1905. Among these were John Bunyak and Joseph Magashegyi; the former settled

halfway between Stockholm and Kaposvar, and the latter in the valley to the south. However, these cannot be considered as founders of the colony. And strictly speaking, neither the men who occupied their homesteads in 1901 and 1902, since they were too close to the older colonies to be regarded as an independent group. The Stockholm Hungarian settlement was definitely and permanently established in 1903 when eighteen men with their families made their homes in the district served by the recently opened railway siding, named Stockholm. With the exception of three men they were members of the emigrant contingent which left Hungary in 1902. Among these the Shivak and Banga families were to become the largest in the course of time. For the above stated reasons the silver jubilee of the founding of the colony was celebrated in 1928.

But let us recall the names of all pioneers and trailblazers up to the year 1905 when all the available homesteads had been taken and the only chance for late comers was to buy company owned land.

The very first settler in the district was John Drotar who came to Canada in 1900 and moved over from Kaposvar into his home with his wife and a three year old daughter, on November 9th, 1901. After a few days a boy was born, the first birth in the new district.

In 1902 four men with their families (11 souls): Paul Diosi, Andrew Kish, Joe Kurucz, Joe Revesz and a bachelor, Steve Biro, settled in the neighborhood. All of them came from Hungary by way of Kaposvar.

It is difficult to tell which of them put up his home first. They came about the same time in early spring with the purpose of constructing at least some temporary buildings on their homesteads. They were fortunate in finding shelter in a granary on the land of Frank Toth, Sr., a Kaposvar farmer who used to work this land from his distant home. As soon as Diosi had a roof on his barn, they moved to a new shelter and each began to build a small barn and a log and mud house of the modest size of 14 x 16 feet, divided into two rooms. Acquiring a breaking plow, wagon, drill and a team of oxen they began to break up the land in the same spring. Next year they bought horses, probably the first in the colony.

The year 1903 saw the largest group of homesteaders, 18 families, approximately 75 souls. The majority of these settled down south of the Canadian Pacific Railway line, a few around the village and north. John Shivak with his wife and six children was among the very first, together with Steve Potyok (4), and Steve Babics (3), both accompanied by their families.

These were soon followed by others, men, women and children (their total number is given in brackets): Mike Banga (8), Louis Bodnar (4), Menyhart Drotar (3), Mike Herman (3), Steve Kaczur



Sr. (7), Steve Koczka (6), George Pilchak (5), John Schaufert (9), Mike Schaufert (widower), Steve Stadler (4), Steve Stumphauer (2), Mike Trohak (5), Andrew Yanyu, Sr. (5), Andrew Bunyak (5).

Most of the foregoing came from Hungary in 1902, some in 1901. Soon they were joined by two young men, sons of Kaposvar settlers: George Mario and John Patrick.

The 1903 contingent of settlers was a close knit, constructive group on whom the colony and the Parish was built, and up to the present their children and grandchildren form the overwhelming majority. They can be considered as the real founders of the Hungarian settlement. The following year (1904) brought 15 families (approximately 70 souls), most of whom settled on homesteads in the north. They are as follows (the total number of members in the family indicated).

Mike Bacsu, Steve Bomberak (6), John Budahazy (3), John Czin-ku, Sr. (4), John Chelle, Sr. (6), Matthias Herperger (13), John Hus-tak (9), Mike Hegedus (5), Emery Kertesz (5), George Milics (3), Steve Oyka (5), John Riczu (6). All these came from Hungary and three from Kaposvar: Paul Hornyak, Bert Saxon, Steve Smerekowsky.

There were only 7 new settlers recorded in 1905 (approximately 18 souls): Mike Estok, Sr. (4), Emery Orosz, Steve Poncsak, Alex Potyok, Mike Stadler, Matthias Stumphauer, Steve Vali (7). We may mention that homesteads were filed also by the grown up boys in the families: Mike Estok, Jr., Steve Kaczur, Jr., Victor Schaufert, Rudolph Schaufert.

All told, approximately 50 homesteads were taken and occupied by the end of 1905. As for the population, including Joe Magashegyi (7), and John Bunyak (5), who had been here before and others who could not obtain homesteads, such as Andrew Yanyu, Jr. and Emery Yanyu, there were about 60 families, totalling 200 souls. This figure is confirmed by the recorded number of families who were to support the first church completed late 1905. The number of Catholic families was estimated at 55.

It is worth mentioning that during the next 15 years up to 1920 at least 50 more Hungarian families settled in this farming district. During that period together with natural increase the number of families had doubled and the population figure went well above 650.

What were the advantages that attracted such a great number of Hungarian speaking settlers even from other districts in Saskatchewan?

It was not the fertility of the land which is inferior to that of the Kaposvar and Swedish colonies. What appealed to them most was the cultural and spiritual atmosphere, the congenial environment where they could associate with people of the same origin, mother-

tongue and religion and could maintain their social and family traditions. This was definitely assured when a church had been built, and regular services were conducted by a spiritual leader who spoke their language.



**Mrs. John Shivak and Family**



**Golden wedding anniversary of Mr. and Mrs. Mike Bacsu**

### III.

## Cultural and Social Progress

### THE FIRST GENERATION (1901-1920).

**T**HE history of the Colony may be divided into three periods of successive generations, comprising a span of twenty years each.

Within these outlines we may render an account of their material and financial expansion, then of their cultural and social progress. Since religious worship and organization played a very great part in their lives, we prefer to deal with that subject in a separate chapter.

It might be a tempting and interesting project to give a detailed account of the hardships, trials and struggles of the pioneering years. But this phase will be covered only in a general way because the task of turning the sod followed a similar pattern all over the West and our settlers came fifteen years after the Kaposvar and New Stockholm pioneers.

#### Pioneering and Expansion.

As a rule, they started with meagre funds, seizing every opportunity to work in and outside the colony. After their arrival in Kaposvar the new settlers had to put up with loneliness, unfamiliar surroundings, strange tongue and customs, vagaries of climate, lack of elementary comforts. But they were more than able to meet the challenge. Coming of a hardy peasant stock they were accustomed to strenuous work and thrifty ways of living. They could have gone to the cities or to the States to make easier money, but would not retreat or quit till their land hunger was satisfied, and a brighter future for their offspring was evident.

Their efforts were fortified by the example of earlier settlers in the neighboring colonies, who had made good under heavier handicaps. Pioneering was made easier since more opportunities for work were available, the distance from the railway was no great problem and transportation costs were made lower. Of the ups and downs of the earlier period the year most remembered was 1907 when about the middle of August a heavy frost completely ruined the promising crops, reducing the yield to a few bushels per acre and the price between 14 and 20 cents a bushel. On the other hand the 1908 and 1913 crops were among the best in quantity and quality.

It took at least ten years for most of the settlers to emerge from the pioneering stage. We may note as marks of expansion: farming with horses and better implements became general, more land was acquired from the Canadian Pacific and Hudson's Bay Companies. As a result, the yield became greater, the price of grain increased, while the value of the commodities remained at a reasonable level. The expansion was more pronounced during the first World War. Prices rose while more land was acquired and brought under cultivation. The non-producing and unoccupied lands in the northern part of the colony served as excellent pastures for the cattle, paving the way for a well balanced economy. When the prices of agricultural products climbed to unprecedented levels, there was even a greater tendency to borrow money, easily obtained from financial institutions. High pressure salesmen urged them to buy land, heavy machinery, automobiles, and to build better homes. At least nine brick homes were built, comparatively more than in any other colony of this size. This was evidence of the prosperity of satisfied colonists, most of whom by this time made a decision to remain in this country for good. It could not be ascertained who bought the first horse; probably, Andrew Kish. The other firsts: first buggy, Joe Revesz, first threshing outfit, John Bunyak, first car, Mike Estok, Jr., first frame house, Mike Hegedus, first brick home, John Shivak.

However, with the unexpected fall in prices immediately after the war the foundations of many farms were shaken, some of them irreparably. Debts went up, land and machinery were lost. This also effected the buildings erected by the Community in prosperous years, the School and the Hall.

Of the many success stories, we mention that of a young man of eighteen, who came to this country along with his uncle in the fall of 1902.

His total capital amounted to 25 cents. When filing a homestead in the following spring, he had to borrow ten dollars. For two summers he worked on the railway construction gang, earning 25 dollars a month with board. He was soon in a position to buy a team of oxen, put up a log and sod house at a cost of two dollars and fifty cents. In 1904 with the help of his uncle he broke ten acres, in 1905, fifty-two acres. The first crop was 364 bushels, the second over 1300. The same year he built a better home, and married in 1906. In 1908 he bought the first team of horses. In 1915 he bought a half section on credit at \$22.00 an acre and three years later another half section at \$20.00 an acre. He had to work hard to clear these bushlands, in a few years he paid his debt, bought a thresher and a car, and employed one or two hired men during the busy season. As for livestock there were more than a dozen horses and

at least twice as many head of cattle. He had no idea of the number of hogs on his farm.

We may quote another example of success: "I reached Whitewood in the early spring of 1900 with three dollars in my pocket. Worked in Kaposvar and other places and sent for my family in the old country. My first log and sod house was 14 x 16. First acquisitions: a team of oxen \$100.00, wagon and plow on credit. The first crop was 150 bushels, price 50-53 cents. Next year I got a team of horses for \$90.00, then a seeder and reaper. Bought  $\frac{1}{4}$  section at \$16.25 in 1910 and it was paid for in a year. In the following years acquired three more quarters. Bought a car in 1917."

Of all the early settlers, probably Joseph Magashegyi (popularly called "Hegy") became most prosperous. He started in the early nineties in partnership with a French Canadian, Marcil. Later in 1902 he bought a farm in the valley (at present the property of J. Soloshy), and in 1915 he acquired a great part of the Bird's Point resort in the Qu'Appelle Valley, making it a popular place for visitors and tourists. Five years later he opened a pool room in the village. In 1928 he sold his property and with his family moved to California where he died a few years ago.

### **Cultural standing.**

The first generation of settlers did not have much schooling and formal education in their native land. But having more time on their hands here, they strived to improve their cultural standing and make up for deficiencies.

They were avid readers of weekly papers, monthly publications, and books in their mother tongue and anxious to transmit the little they possessed to their children. Many of them taught their children Hungarian reading and writing (an easy task compared to the complicated English spelling), Bible stories and catechism. In this way almost all the children picked up some knowledge of their traditional culture in those early years. They were even more eager to send their children to the public schools and give them opportunity for better education. They heartily supported their parish priest in his effort to establish the community of Carmelite Sisters with a view to starting a private day and boarding school of their own. Two Sisters arrived from the States in 1916 and settled in the unused rectory building and the following year the still existing school structure was erected. The blessing of the corner stone was performed on June 29th, the feast of Sts. Peter and Paul. Ever since, the solemn closing of the school at the end of the term was held on that day. Here we may insert the words of the cornerstone document.

## “CORNER STONE DOCUMENT

Whereby it is made known to future descendants that this Saint Joseph School was built through the initiative of Rev. Father Stephen Soos, Pastor of Kaposvar and Stockholm in 1917, during the reign of Pope Benedict XV and of George V of Great Britain, when Oliver Elzear Mathieu was Archbishop of Regina. The purpose of erecting the school was to provide for the religious instruction of the children of the Hungarian settlers of Stockholm. To carry out this work the Carmelite Sisters of the Sacred Heart of Jesus were placed in charge of the school. The school was built by Wilson and Wilson, building contractors of Regina. The project was financed through the voluntary donations of the parishioners at the cost of approximately \$6,000. May this building, of which to-day we place the Corner Stone (in which this document is sealed), stand for the greater glory of God and promote the interests of the Canadian Hungarians throughout the years. Fulfilling this sublime purpose may it proclaim to the descendants the religious zeal and self-sacrificing spirit of their forefathers”.

The parishioners gladly contributed towards the remodelling of the Rectory and a substantial amount was collected to defray part of the cost of the school building which is said to have cost in the neighbourhood of eight thousand dollars after completion. Apart from paying taxes for the support of the public schools, many parents chose to carry an extra burden in the interest of this private school conducted by the Sisters.

The boarding school was very popular even in the neighbouring communities from which several pupils attended. Thus Stockholm was becoming a cultural centre in furnishing educational facilities for those who were to be the future leaders. It is to be regretted that, because of the death of the Superior and an economic recession, teaching had to be discontinued in 1920. While the parents did their best to promote grade schools, their resources were not sufficient to afford high school education. There were only a few who went beyond grade VIII.

## Social Activities.

The immigrants from Hungary had been living in villages before coming to this country. It was very difficult for them at the start to live on scattered farms. But this change was made comparatively easy under the circumstances, as the inhabitants on farms were connected by many common ties, not only those of occupation and material interests, but also those of common origin in the same country and region. What counted most with them, were the tra-

ditions and observances of the same creed. The whole colony seemed to be practically one family. Aloofness from external influences made them preserve the good they inherited and accept only the proven advantages of the new environment.

The occasions of worship on Sundays and holydays brought the people together very often and church going was also a matter of social importance.

Other opportunities for social intercourse were the events in the life of the family: births, weddings, and deaths. They observed many traditional customs, especially at weddings. Oral invitations for the weddings were sent out by two men deputed by the fathers of the groom and bride. They carried canes on which ribbons were tied and called on the chosen guests, using a special rhythmic form of invitation. Before going to the church the bride took a solemn leave of her parents and the bridal couple received the blessings of the parents. The above mentioned young men were servers at the wedding banquet. Each course being served was accompanied by a recital of formulae for the occasion. The wedding dance and the lunch were a happy "everybody welcome" affair. Lest we forget, the first wedding in the colony, that of Victor Schaufert and Mary Kriba, took place on May 11th, 1902.

The wife did the housework, but in pioneer times she often lent her hands for outdoor work on the land and was very clever in performing manly labors. She was in most cases a real expert in cuisine in preparing traditional national meals, devoted much time to cooking and seldom relied on commercial items of food. Large families with eight to ten children were quite normal, family life conservative, divorce unknown.

Close to the house there was a vegetable garden where they grew besides the well-known varieties melons, poppies, tobacco and plenty of flowers. As for the inside appearance of their homes, they were whitewashed, neat and ornamented with potted plants and valuable and artistic handmade embroideries. They were fond of religious emblems and pictures which adorned the walls in great number.

The early settlers preserved their native customs even in the manner of dress, at least for a while. The men soon discarded the old for the new; the women, however, kept on wearing wide skirts and coloured shawls which are retained by some of them up to the present.

Though living in modest circumstances they were famous for their hospitality and polite manners, a mark of European civilization. Singing, dancing and music were a favorite pastime with them in the family and at social gatherings.

One of the first groups to promote social life among the settlers.





**Members of the Youth Drama Group**



**Young people in national costume  
on the occasion of Saskatchewan's Jubilee celebration**

was a Brass Band organized in 1909 under the leadership of Joe Kish. It was active for ten years. The first members were Mike Bacsu, Paul Diosi, Mike Estok, John Patrick, Steve Lisik, Steve Orosz, Sr., Steve Orosz, Jr., Victor Schaufert, Andrew Kish. The purpose was to accompany the singing at church services, provide music at social functions, picnics and dances. Members who joined later were: Menyhart Drotar, Mike Stadler, and Steve Stadler. When Joe Kish left the colony, his place was taken by S. Orosz. In course of time they became widely known and were invited to outside points, among others, the Provincial Exhibition at Brandon. In the early twenties a new group was formed by Peter Biro with second generation members and this was active until 1929.

As regards entertainment dances were frequent, held in the homes, schools, and at Stenberg Hall in the village. Basket socials were very popular in the latter part of the period. On one occasion at the opening of the new Community Hall the income reached one thousand dollars. The first picnic was held on June 29, 1917.

Because of the success of these gatherings a need was felt for the construction of a Community Hall. This was completed in 1919, size 30 x 60 ft. It was financed partly through shares sold in denomination of twenty-five dollars. Soon after standard movie equipment was installed and continued in operation for four years; it was one of the first installations of this type in the East Central part of the Province, providing a much needed entertainment for a large section of the population. The Hall served as a social centre for gatherings and entertainment in the following years and attracted patrons from distant communities in the province, notably on November 19, the feast day of St. Elizabeth, the patron saint of the church.

The grounds for the school and Hall, approximately five acres, were part of a tract of Canadian Pacific Railway land adjoining the village, (later named St. Joseph's subdivision). This was bought by the parish priest, Father Soos, and divided into building lots. Soon some of these were acquired by parishioners planning to retire and settle down near the church.

As for the general characteristics of the settlers, the intense family bond was most noticeable, the cooperative spirit of mutual understanding and help reigned supreme. The people were firmly attached to their land and home. Farming was considered a vocation rather than a money making proposition. There was a keen sense of belonging to the colony in observing traditions and the way of life of their ancestors, but they had enough common sense to adopt new ways and practices whenever these proved to their advantage. Because a thing was new, it did not necessarily appeal to them; in this way they followed a sound and reserved judgment. Unknown

peddlers of new wares, books and pamphlets, quacks with quick cures, promoters of recent sects seldom found sympathy or patronage with them. On account of their modest resources there was not much mobility and no curiosity to visit the cities, even occasionally.

Unfamiliarity with the official language was the reason for not taking active part in municipal and other gatherings. In spite of this apparent indifference they took lively interest in the provincial and federal elections, where they consistently voted Liberal; probably because the administration at Ottawa happened to be in the hands of that party at the time of their immigration. The strongest ties binding them were religion and Church, around which their lives revolved. The colonists were 99% devout Roman Catholics of the Latin and Greek rites. Even their usual form of salutation has been of a religious character up to this day: "Praised be Jesus Christ".

### **THE SECOND GENERATION (1921-1939)**

During the war the settlers were cut off from their native country which fought on the side of the Central Powers.

The termination of hostilities brought some relief to their anxiety and fear. The peace treaties, however, weighed heavily on Hungary, for she lost more than any of the other defeated countries and was weakened by distress and suffering as an aftermath of the war.

As soon as communications had been restored, the settlers were informed of the plight of their relatives and friends. These not only begged for temporary help but many of them were also eager to escape their hard lot, and to try their luck in the promised land. The colonists showed great understanding and sympathy for their former countrymen and did their best to bring them to the new world. This was done by sending them the necessary papers for an assured employment and vouching that the immigrants would not become public liability. In some instances they loaned the passage money or sent steamship tickets.

As a result Stockholm became a haven and crossroads for many immigrants from 1922 to 1930 and approximately 30 permanent settlers were added to the existing population. Some of them brought their families, others married after a few years and remained in the colony. At the same time the movement of retired farmers to the new subdivision of Stockholm village had become even more pronounced. We may say that in the late twenties the settlement reached the peak of its population (including farmhands and transients).

The sudden drop in the price of farm commodities and the liquidation of outstanding debts brought about painful readjustments in the rural economy. Money, machinery, lands were lost and the debt load became heavier. But owing to the intrepid courage and perseverance of the farmers a recovery was soon noticeable and the process of mechanization was resumed. More cars and tractors came into use, although the majority were still working with horses.

The dusty and penniless thirties did not affect the farmers as adversely as those in the treeless prairie regions. In the parkbelt district, as our central part of the province is called, even when the crops were near total failure as in 1931 and 1937, the livestock raised on the farm saved the people from starvation, the well kept gardens supplied their own needs and generous contributions went to the vegetable cars that left here for drought stricken areas. Those difficult times witnessed a true spirit of mutual help and cooperation.

### **Cultural and Social**

Since the Carmelite Sisters left, teaching was discontinued in the private school. The parishioners, however, never gave up the hope of securing the services of Sisters who would resume teaching in the vacant school building.

Soon after the war Father Soos made several attempts to that effect in Canada and in Europe. At last he succeeded in securing three members of the Sisters of Social Service from Hungary. Two of them were qualified teachers in their country but were unable to teach in the English language. Soon steps were taken to organize a R. C. Separate School District. After two unsuccessful attempts the new district was established in the fall of 1925 and teaching began in February 1926 with a lay teacher in charge. It took ten years for the new religious community to take over teaching with two qualified Canadian members in 1933.

These ten years were filled with numerous activities initiated and carried out by the Sisters whose presence in the Parish proved to be a blessing of great importance. A vigorous cultural and social life, never dreamed of before, began in the Colony. Women's and girls' associations were formed, children's Saturday and Sunday School courses were started, providing teaching and training in religion, singing, handicrafts and in the Hungarian language. The church choir was reorganized, dramatics were made an integral part of Parish life. Each year at least half a dozen plays and concerts were staged by the Drama group of the parishioners. During the decade of depression with few cars in use and no cinema in the neighbourhood, those activities were intensified. More books were secured for the parish library, more reading was done in the homes,

interest in handicrafts was awakened. On many occasions, as on Sunday afternoons, the Community Hall grounds were teeming with young people engaged in friendly ballgames.

In 1929 the Men's Holy Name Society and the Young Men's Club were organized. Thus there were societies for every age group. They were in great favour with those who lived within a reasonable distance from the center as they were able to attend meetings. The gatherings of these societies were held regularly in the school or parish hall. In the winter season the men's meetings were quite often held in the homes of the members. To get an idea of such a meeting, we may give an example of one conducted in the late thirties.

To a lonely farm out in the snow covered country would come the men from every direction to be received with a warm and fraternal welcome. The business and educational part of the meeting would be followed by the religious and inspirational part, conducted by the Spiritual Director. At the conclusion refreshments were served. The members found good diversion as well as inspiration in this arrangement and would seldom miss these occasions.

The membership of these societies was not large, but the members were filled with devotion and loyalty. They were and still are the staunchest collaborators of the Pastor and the most trustworthy workers of the Parish. Never was anyone heard to say, "I have no time. I am too busy to work for the parish".

### **Visitors from Hungary.**

Cultural and social contacts were promoted also by a stream of distinguished visitors to the Colony from 1923 to 1931. Apart from new arrivals seeking employment or prospective settlers, a number of clergymen, newspapermen, authors, officials of immigration, colonization, railway and steamship agencies visited the colony. Here are recorded the names of a few prominent leaders from Hungary in chronological order.

1923: Alexander Dobay, magazine editor, as a personal representative of Count Albert Apponyi, the great statesman who was unable to come to Western Canada during his tour of the North American Continent.

1924: Msgr. Bela Turi, member of parliament and editor of the *Nemzeti Ujsag*, one of the most influential dailies.

1925: Rev. G. Lischerong, a missionary of the Jesuit order, who was sent to China the following year.

Sister Margaret Slachta, the foundress and General Superior of the Sisters of Social Service, the first woman member of the Hungarian Parliament.

1926: Most Rev. Stephen Hanauer, Bishop of Vac, after attending the International Eucharistic Congress in Chicago.

1927: Baron Zsigmond Perenyi, member of the Upper House, President of the World Federation of Hungarians, in the course of his North American tour.

1928: Most Rev. John Mikes, Bishop of Szombathely, on the occasion of the Colony's Silver Jubilee.

1931: Rev. Father Eugene Ecker, Jesuit missionary, while engaged in visiting Hungarian groups on the Continent.

1935: Rev. Father Bela Zsigovits, author and lecturer, on his round the world tour. This was his second visit.

1937: The second visit of Rev. G. Lischerong on his return from North China.

During this period the colony was honored on several occasions by the presence of Hungarian Consuls from Winnipeg and Montreal. Since Hungary was officially represented in Canada up to the Second World War, the members of the consulate gave great assistance to the problems of Hungarian immigrants.

The visits of distinguished representatives from Hungary had an important bearing on the attitude of the government that had once discouraged emigration to Canada. As a result of information gathered by the visitors, former restrictions were relaxed and obstacles removed from the way of those desirous of making their homes in this country.

Bishop Hanauer arrived in Stockholm on July 16, 1926, and stayed three days. He was accompanied by Msgr. P. Weber, D.D., his secretary, Rev. B. Zsigovits, D.D., parish priest, and Rev. J. Hemm, Jesuit missionary. The whole congregation went to meet the Bishop and a mounted escort led the visitors to the parish hall where a reception was held. At the Sunday services on July 18th the Bishop again spoke to the faithful. The parishioners recall this visit with great joy and gratitude.

### **Silver Jubilee.**

The colony observed the 25th anniversary of its founding on July 8th and 9th, 1928 with a celebration arousing Canada wide interest.

The achievements of the pioneers were acknowledged by the Dominion Government when the Prime Minister sent his greetings, while the Provincial Government was represented by Dr. J. M. Uhrich, the Minister of Public Health. The Archbishop of Regina, who was unable to attend due to illness, was represented by his Secretary. The Hungarian Government sent an invaluable and artistic memorial banner. The embroidered silk banner, one side

of which represents St. Elizabeth of Hungary, and the other the Hungarian Coat of Arms, is the work of the Good Shepherd Sisters in Budapest, and is one of the most beautiful banners ever made in Hungary. The parish cherishes it as a precious relic, an equivalent of which is not found in any one of the Canadian and American Hungarian churches. Incidentally, the jubilee banner was displayed at the World Grain and Canadian Handicrafts Exhibition in July and August, 1933 and was the centre of general interest and object of admiration.

The jubilee was an outstanding event on account of the arrival of Count John Mikes, Bishop of Szombathely, Hungary. He dedicated and blessed the banner and conveyed the message of the Hungarian Hierarchy and Government. The Bishop remained three days after which he continued his journey to Sydney, Australia, where he represented Hungary at the International Eucharistic Congress. Rev. John Szabo, a Hungarian parish priest from the United States, accompanied him on his world tour and in his book "From America to Australia" he devoted a special chapter to the Stockholm celebration.

A large number of people of Hungarian descent attended this jubilee and undoubtedly up to that time it was the largest gathering of Hungarians ever held in Canada.

In return and in token of gratitude for the wonderful gift the Stockholm Colony that same year sent a beautiful Canadian flag and some Canadian soil to Hungary.

On the occasion of the St. Elizabeth's day celebration on November 19th these souvenirs were handed to Ivan Hordosy, editor of the "Canadian Hungarian News" in Winnipeg, who was to lead a group of pilgrims to Budapest before Christmas. The banner and sod were officially received in the Hungarian House of Parliament by B. Scitovszky, Minister of Internal Affairs, and Baron Zsigmond Perenyi, President of the World Federation of Hungarians. This was the first time in Canadian history that its flag was sent to the Hungarian Government, an event widely publicized and acclaimed in that country.

Thus the jubilee celebration served a purpose of great importance by bringing together two distant nations in the spirit of mutual understanding, appreciation and good will.

### **Social Character.**

The social character of the second period did not change considerably from the previous pattern.

The family bond is still strong, but contacts with the outside world bringing in new ideas are most frequent through visitors



and from travels to distant points in the Dominion. Hungarian is still the language of the family and of the church. Marriages are for the most part within the colony; if outside, they are in the same denomination. Due to better schooling and command of the official language of the country more interest is shown in public meetings as in school, rural municipality, farmers' organizations. Politically they are not exclusively liberal, a fraction of them are in favour of the farmer-labour movement.

With those who are compelled to leave the district for economic reasons there is a tendency to settle in a community or group of their own race and religion. During these years Abbotsford, British Columbia, attracted the largest group from Stockholm. There they acquitted themselves very well either as farmers or in the trades, carrying on the traditions of their former colony as loyal members of the Church.

Before closing this chapter it would be in order to record the mental attitude and experience of the first settlers, who reached a certain level of material prosperity and social welfare. Did they find in this country what they hoped for before leaving the Old World?

### **Did they find what they expected?**

In the year of the Colony's Silver Jubilee almost all the settlers were interviewed by the Pastor of St. Elizabeth's Parish.

He asked them these questions: Are you satisfied with your lot in this country? Would you like to return to Hungary or move to the States of America, or to another colony?

The old settlers told the interviewer that they were far better off than they were in their native country and would never consider the idea of returning with the intention of making their permanent home there. Making a visit is a different thing, and they would gladly do it if they could afford it. They admitted, however, that they were homesick for a couple of years in this "no man's" land, and were longing for more company and the blessings of advanced civilization. There was only one, a former resident of the States, who had some desire to return to the States for good, but he never made an attempt to do so. There is nothing more indicative of their attachment to the land than their efforts to bring their relatives and friends to this country after the war. At times this meant considerable trouble and expense.

Some of them expressed their feelings in plain and vivid words, as, e.g., "Here we live in our own homes whereas over there we did not have a chicken coop we could call our own"... "I had to struggle hard in order to earn my living. Jobs were scarce and I had to



A group of altar boys



Summer school at Stockholm

be on the move most of the time. I hate moving. Living on a farm is best for me"... "I did not like the cold climate and the absence of fruit trees. But now having a large family, I would not leave at any price"... "I worked hard in the old country and still could not make good. But here anyone who loves to work will be a success sooner or later"... "I did not like the social system in Europe, so I would rather live and die in a country where there is more freedom and justice"... "There is such an abundance of food, fuel and pasture land here. At home I had to buy everything for my large family. Now all of them are well established and all my close relatives are in Canada. However, I am still ready and willing to do my utmost for my native Hungary, if called upon to do so"... "Even if they used a big stick to drive me back to Europe, I would not go"... "I had to pass through many hardships and trials, but am grateful to Providence that brought and kept me here"... "I have never been homesick, not even during the trying years of the pioneering period"... "I've never thought of returning to my country of origin, not even in my dreams"... "I would not go back, not even if the fences were made of sausages. But I would consider a warmer climate in the States"... "I never missed anything on my farm, except fruit trees"... "I am satisfied here, especially since a church was built"... "What I like here most is that I don't have to work for a landlord. I'm on my own".

### **THE THIRD GENERATION (1940-57)**

The beginning of the third period almost coincides with Canada's entry into the Second World War.

The importance of the war was not realized and its impact not felt at first. A few young men volunteered for the armed services, materials became scarce and prices advanced. Agriculture was still suffering from the effects of the slump of the past decade.

At a later stage more boys and girls began to leave the farms for the army and for factories in the East. Mechanization continued at a rapid pace. Farmers no longer discussed the advantages of horse versus tractor, as they did during the preceding period. With greater demand for farm produce, prices rose at a time when crops were bountiful and of good quality, as in 1944 and 1945. This resulted in a general wave of prosperity. More land was acquired, new or secondhand machinery was bought and the returning young men took up work on the farm. A few farmers from other districts settled on the fringe of the colony, more old timers moved into the village. The material progress was reflected in new buildings, up to date furnishings, radios, more practical heating installations, particularly after 1950 with the new power line in the district. The

new hospital in the neighbouring town and the hospitalization facilities marked great steps in the field of public health.

### **Cultural and Social**

With the advent of prosperity parents were in a better position to give their children higher education. The number of high school students in the Catholic school increased, a few pursued their studies at colleges in the city and later enrolled in the University. The level of general and formal education had risen considerably. More encouragement was given to the young people in the school and at the youth meetings to extend their mental horizon. However, reading habits had not developed as might be expected, except in the line of light reading.

Since attendance at motion picture shows became a habit with many people, a 16 mm projector was installed in the Hall to provide wholesome entertainment. The shows were held once a week, except during the winter months.

Live acting was not neglected either. The drama group of the parish never failed in staging one or two full length three act plays each year, even during the war. A good number of boys and girls attended the monthly meetings of the C.Y.C. (Catholic Youth Crusade) under which name the Catholic Youth Movement in Saskatchewan is known, and whose executive is largely responsible for socials in the hall and open air activities on the playgrounds.

During the war the support of the Canadian Red Cross was every one's concern. As a rule, the parishioners of St. Elizabeth's were incorporated in the Village Unit, except for a few years when it was organized as an independent unit with the purpose of arousing keener interest and greater appreciation.

After the war the generosity of the people was extended to a wider field. In response to appeals for relief from relatives, friends and charity organizations in Hungary, a great number of parcels containing food and clothing were sent to Europe by individuals and families. Starting in 1946 the Parish solicited funds from its members and was very active in this work of mercy. Soon at the request of Cardinal Mindszenty, a Canada wide drive for funds was launched for the relief of the needy in his country. Some of the contributions were handed over to him by the Pastor of Stockholm on the occasion of the Marian Congress at Ottawa in June, 1947. This work is still being carried on although on a diminished scale because of the restrictions and heavy customs duties imposed on gift parcels by the Hungarian Government.

After the first world war Stockholm received its share of immigrants; after the second war, however, it was practically impossible

to bring out anyone from the "old country", not even a member of the immediate family. Of the refugees and displaced persons hardly a few reached the colony and none with the purpose of making a permanent home here. The type of new arrivals coming to this country was different from that of the former immigrants. With a few exceptions they were not of the agricultural class, and preferred jobs in the industrial centres.

### **A new way of life.**

The war and its economic consequences, power farming in particular, had a tremendous influence on the way of life of the people in our province.

Due to easy and speedy means of communication there developed a habit of mobility that disregards even great distances in seeking jobs and a higher standard of living. At times some of the youths, without necessity and sufficient deliberation, are ready and willing to give up their work on the farm.

What is the effect on conditions in the rural districts? While the size of the average farm increases, the number of families is diminishing, the villages and schools are decreasing in population. The family bond that endured so strongly for many years is loosening and weakening.

The colony of St. Elizabeth, despite losses to the cities, is still a solid, close knit community with firm family traditions. In many families the mother tongue is still retained; the second and third generations understand and speak the Hungarian language. However, in this and other respects, a gradual conformity to the environment is noticeable. Newspapers, comics, radio, movies and television have a great levelling influence, bringing about a standardized product even as to the way you think, look, dress, speak, act, and "act up" like everybody else.

Of those who left the colony in recent years, many found employment in the city of Hamilton, Ontario, which is still a destination for those going to Eastern Canada. There is a good sized group there originating from Stockholm. It is a fact worth noting that a few older settlers, who left years ago with the intention of remaining in the East, have been returning recently to spend at least part of the year here.

### **Group settlement**

To make an appraisal of the group settlement plan may now be in order, since the Hungarian colony is one of the smaller solid

groups with the same ethnic origin, mother tongue and religion.

The idea of group settlement was widely discussed between the two world wars, mostly from the angle of assimilation and citizenship. Public opinion was against forming new group colonies of Europeans. It was maintained that settlers in such colonies were slow in learning the English language and in adopting the ways of the new country. However, it was often forgotten that language and social adjustments are only external marks of our national life. There are more important aspects of assimilation, as, love of the land and country, determination to stay on the farm, qualities of hard work, thrift, respect for law and order, and devotion to the principles of religion and morality. No doubt, without these requisites of organic integration, no amount of economic and social conformity will bring about lasting benefits.

Applying these aspects to the colonists from Hungary, we are safe in saying that they were already assimilated after the first 25 years in this district. They loved the soil, were striving to have a farm for each son, were anxious to help more immigrants to Canada and never thought of returning to end their days in their country of origin. They were interested in the education of their children and in public affairs, such as elections. As regards language, the first settlers without formal schooling learned the words and phrases of everyday life fairly well and as they advanced in prosperity they gradually adopted the higher living standards of the New World.

At present, after 50 years of settlement, we are in a better position to evaluate the integration of this colony into Canadian life. The fears of the critics of the group settlement scheme have not materialized. On the contrary, since the war the pace of assimilation is faster than could be expected. In some instances, instead of unity in diversity, the tendency is to uniformity of ideas and thinking with the majority, as already mentioned, and this is not an unmixed blessing in a democratic society. Fortunately, the colony has still a character of its own. With very few exceptions, the people, even of the third generation, are attached to certain distinct cultural traditions of their race and can speak their mother tongue. This results in a richer and more diversified way of life and will bind together the old and the new generations for years to come. Bilingualism opens greater possibilities for mutual understanding and good will at home and abroad. As Stanley Jones put it: A man who speaks just one language is like the individual who knows only one country.

Summing up, the group settlement has served a good purpose and stood the test of time in many ways; most of all in the field of religion and church organization. Despite repeated economic setbacks and the inroads of the machine age, the colony can still hold her

own in population, and for many people it is a permanent home, a place where they can enjoy the blessings of a happy and more abundant life.



**A few surviving oldtimers**

#### IV.

## Building Up St. Elizabeth's Parish

Laying the Groundwork

(1905-1914)



Father Joseph Pirot

**T**HE Hungarian colony is a solid unit in racial origin, mother tongue and religion. With the exception of one or two families, all of them have been of the Roman Catholic faith. To be a Hungarian means to be a Catholic and this fact makes clear the leading role of religion and Church in the lives of the settlers.

The history of this settlement, more so than of any other community of Hungarian descent, revolves around the Church; this is the focus of religious, cultural and social life. The colony is characterized not so much by its accomplishments in the economic field, as by its spiritual life within St. Elizabeth's Parish. In the new world where the maintenance of the church and of its services is the responsibility of the faithful, the economic and spiritual life mutually strengthen and support each other. But let the facts speak for themselves.

In the early period of pioneering the promoters responsible for colonization preferred the group settlement plan whereby settlers of the same background were placed together in the same district. The immigrants from Hungary, on their arrival at Whitewood were directed to Bekevar in the south if they were of the Protestant faith, and to Kaposvar in the north in the case of Roman Catholics. The prospective settlers of the Stockholm district were fortunate in spending their first months in a community with a place of worship and a resident pastor of souls, Father Woodcutter; thus they were



never without the services of their religion. Even later, when on their homesteads, they would go to Kaposvar on Sundays to hear Mass and receive the sacraments. The worshippers used ox teams for transportation, or walked the whole distance of 10 to 20 miles. It often happened that the people from Stockholm reached the church earlier than the local residents.

By the summer of 1904 the number of settlers had increased considerably and it became evident that the new colony needed special attention. Father Joseph Pirot, a native of Belgium, assistant priest in Kaposvar, ordained in 1904, began to visit these people and made arrangements to have services on weekdays in the homes of the colonists. The first Mass in the Stockholm district was said by him in the early fall of 1904 on a weekday in the modest home of Joe Kurucz, three and a half miles south east of the village. The place of the second Mass was the home of Andrew Kish, which was followed by other services in the homes of John Chelle, Mike Trohak, John Shivak; usually on weekdays, once a month, except in winter time. In February 1905 Fr. Woodcutter resigned his position to join the Immigration Department in Winnipeg and Fr. Pirot was appointed Pastor of Kaposvar by the Archbishop of St. Boniface, who had jurisdiction over South Saskatchewan at that time. The "Mission of Stockholm" was officially established in August 1905 and a register of baptisms, marriages, and funerals, was started. The first entry was made on September 11th, recording the baptism of Margaret Revesz. The first councillors of the church were Andrew Kish and Mike Trohak.

### **The First Church**

Very soon plans were made to secure land for a Church and cemetery. There were some people who wished to erect the Church in the geographical centre of the colony, approximately two miles north west of the village. After some discussion the advice of the Pastor was accepted, which was to have the church closer to the railway, on the present site. Five acres of land were donated by John Shivak for church and cemetery grounds. In many respects it has proved an ideal location and, being built on a hill, the church was visible for many miles. The construction, in charge of a contractor who employed paid labour, was completed by Christmas 1905. The first Mass was said on December 26th, feast of St. Stephen, the proto-martyr. The size of the frame structure was 30 x 60 feet, to which was later attached a Sanctuary and Sacristy.

The funds for the building were raised through pledges of sixty-five dollars from each of the approximately fifty-five families. The actual cash spent on material and labour was advanced and loaned.



**The first Church and Rectory**

to the congregation by the Diocese of St. Boniface. The furnishings, such as altar, pews, statues, banners, vestments and vessels were paid for from individual donations and church collections, some of them shortly after the completion of the building, other items at later dates. (The names of families responsible for these gifts are recorded in the next chapter).

The costs of erecting and furnishing amounted to a total of 3709 dollars, of which 3095 dollars went towards the church building, 614 on the furnishings. This was a large amount, considering the poverty of the pioneering settlers. In addition, five families donated a 500 lb. bell, made by Meneely and Company of West Troy, New York. The names of these benefactors, together with those of the Bishop, L. P. A. Langevin and Fr. Pirot, are recorded on the bell: Mike Trohak, John Chelle, Steve Kaczur, Mike Banga, John Bunyak.

On June 12th, 1906 Archbishop Langevin of St. Boniface made a pastoral visitation of the congregation. He blessed the new church and the bell, and administered the sacrament of confirmation. These pioneers who within two or three years after taking up their homesteads could erect a substantial structure, deserved words of praise and commendation from the Bishop. He entered the following record in French in the Register of the Mission:

"On the twelfth day of June, 1906 we visited the recently organized Parish of St. Elizabeth of Hungary and confirmed 79 persons, children as well as adults, of whom 35 were of Kaposvar, 44 of Stockholm.

The Hungarian people of this district received us in procession and we were happy to bless their magnificent, newly built church before administering confirmation. We gladly bless these faithful people and congratulate them on being united in following the leadership of their zealous missionary, Father Pirot, Pastor of Kaposvar, on the fine work they have accomplished with such faith and generosity”.

The Pastor and the settlers had chosen Saint Elizabeth of Hungary as the patron saint of the Parish and the title of their church. She lived in the 13th century (1207-31) and still is one of the most popular saints. Both Hungarians and Germans claim her as their own. Born in Hungary, a daughter of King Andrew II, she married Ludwig, Landgrave of Thuringia in South Germany. After the death of her husband on a Crusade, she was hard pressed and mistreated by relatives. She had to flee her home and led a life of heroic endurance and self-sacrificing charity. St. Elizabeth never returned to her native land and died at the age of 24, as a mother of three children. She was renowned for her works of mercy towards the poor and the sick. On her images St. Elizabeth is represented with an apron full of roses. Her feast is celebrated on November 19th and has been observed as a holyday by the parishioners of Stockholm. It is marked also by the performance of a dramatic production in the Hungarian language, an annual event during the past 35 years. Furthermore a relic (a piece of her red robe) is preserved in this church.

Fr. Pirot made regular visits to Stockholm twice a month (not an easy thing in wintertime during the horse and buggy period) and faithfully ministered to the spiritual needs of his flock. For better results he began to study the mother tongue of the settlers and within a short time, although still a novice in the new language, he composed and published a Hungarian Catechism for the children. He did his best to train and educate the people in the ways of their adopted land, especially as regards church support.

### **The First Rectory**

Because of the growing number of people in the colony, the great distances and the difficulties of travel, he visualized a self supporting parish with a resident priest. With the permission of the Bishop of St. Boniface he took steps to build a priest's house south of the church in 1911. At a meeting on March 20th he advised the people that each family should contribute twenty dollars to defray the costs of a Rectory. His intentions were misunderstood by a number of parishioners who claimed that the congregation was not large enough to build a presbytery and to support a resident pastor. Later

on the leaders of this minority group sent a letter of complaint to the Bishop of St. Boniface. They called in question the ability of Fr. Pirot to administer either Stockholm or Kaposvar, suggested his removal and appointment of a "spiritual Father of our own nation". In conclusion they wrote: "In case this request is left unheeded, we will be obliged to turn to the Holy See with our case".

Despite this aggressive and active opposition the frame structure, consisting of six rooms, was completed by the end of the year. Since Stockholm had not received a resident priest, the building was used only on occasions when the Pastor was visiting here. After his resignation in 1914 it was vacant until 1916 when the Carmelite Sisters settled in the Parish. Thus the frame building proved providential when these Sisters needed housing accommodation and again, later on in 1923 on the arrival of a new order of Sisters.

The outbreak of the war in 1914 brought about a change in the administration of Kaposvar and Stockholm. In 1915 Father Pirot volunteered as a chaplain with the Canadian Army and was sent overseas where he spent five years as chaplain of Catholic soldiers. On his return in 1919 he was appointed pastor of Esterhazy Parish which he served until his retirement in 1942. He was privileged to celebrate his golden jubilee of ordination to the priesthood and died a year after in 1955 at the age of 77 years.



Interior of first church

**BUILDING**

**FOR**

**THE**

**FUTURE**

**(1915-1923)**



**Father Stephen Soos**

In the early days of 1915 a new Pastor was sent by the Archbishop of Regina (to whom the territory of Southern Saskatchewan had been transferred from St. Boniface) to Kaposvar and Stockholm in the person of Father Soos who was to administer these congregations for the next nine years.

Prior to his coming to this country he was a member and for a period provincial Superior of the Carmelite Order in his native Hungary, a nationally known organizer, builder of churches and convents, a popular preacher and author of religious books. One of his outstanding achievements in the field of literature was a translation of the New Testament into modern colloquial language, the first attempt of this kind. He was fifty years of age when released from his order in 1914 and was accepted in the Regina archdiocese as the first Hungarian speaking priest in the diocese. Being full of energy and zeal he followed a similar line of activities, first in the missions of the Melville district, later in his new charge and in several colonies of new Canadians.

### **Reorganizing the Mission of Stockholm.**

Residing in Kaposvar he made frequent visits to Stockholm and soon realized that the latter community should be developed into a self-supporting Parish. On the occasion of his first visit on January

11th, 1915 he was received with great enthusiasm as a priest hailing from the native country of the people. On February 3rd an organizational meeting was held when rules were adopted under which the congregation would be administered in conformity with the laws of the Church. To assure regular support for the Pastor a levy of five dollars for each quarter section of land was determined, limiting the total from each farmer to twenty dollars a year. For special ministrations small fees were to be paid. To acquire the rights of membership in the church, those who obtained homesteads or land by inheritance, were to pay sixty dollars; others who bought land, thirty-five dollars once and for all. The following were elected as members of the church council: Steve Orosz, Victor Schaufert, George Mario and Menyhart Drotar. At a meeting of the council, held on the same date it was resolved that the caretaker of the church receive forty dollars a year and a small remuneration on special occasions, as one dollar at weddings and fifty cents at funerals.

On taking possession of the Parish his first concern was to improve the interior of the church by replacing former furnishings and adding new items. On his initiative a new, imposing main altar in the Gothic style was installed from the donations of the parishioners. An elaborate shrine in honour of Our Lady of Lourdes was set up in the south west corner of the nave, being a gift of Joseph Magashegyi ("Hegy"). A large iron crucifix for the cemetery was donated by Louis Bodnar. Other donations were: stations of the cross by Andrew Yanyu, Sr., a reed organ for the choir gallery by Steve Molnar, St. Anthony's statue by John Chelle, Sr., banners by George Pilchak and George Toth.

### **Carmelite Sisters and School.**

Apart from spiritual activities his foremost ambition was to raise the cultural level of the people and give their children the best possible education. In this regard he considered the influence of a religious sisterhood indispensable. He contacted a convent of Carmelite Sisters in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, belonging to a congregation he had helped to introduce in Hungary. In 1916 two Sisters were sent to Stockholm where they were accommodated in the unused Rectory building.

After securing the services of these Sisters, he foresaw the need of further expansion as to grounds and buildings. He persuaded the Canadian Pacific Railway officials to divide into building lots the Company property north of the village and sell them to applicants. He reserved six acres for hall and school grounds; the remaining lots were bought by people who planned to retire some day



The Catholic School



The Community Hall

and preferred a location near the church. A site for his residence was one of them. As the school was to be named after St. Joseph, this north section of the village was officially called "St. Joseph's subdivision of the townsite of Stockholm". The acquisition of this company property proved to be of first rate importance for the future of the Parish and of the village. The Parish hall and school grounds are adjoining one another, so are the homes and grounds (parcels of land) of the retired farmers.

In 1917 this was followed by the construction of a boarding school east of the church and in 1919 a Community Hall was built. The funds for the school were raised through contributions from the parishioners and Pastor, but the greater amount was a loan of \$4000 from Joseph Magashegyi, vouched for by the Episcopal Corporation of Regina. To defray the costs of the Hall, shares in denominations of twenty-five dollars were sold to the parishioners. It was expected that the Hall would be a paying, even profitable proposition. There was a feverish building activity in those years, never experienced before in this part of the country. More about this progress was related in the earlier part of the history, when giving an account of the first generation.

### **First Resident Priest.**

These activities required almost daily visits by the Pastor. With the approval of the Archbishop he decided to make a permanent residence in this community, serving Kaposvar as well. He built a brick veneer house of his own from his private funds in 1921, where he resided until the end of 1923, receiving a nominal sum, amounting to rental, in lieu of a community owned Rectory. In consideration for the foregoing progress the Archbishop of Regina raised St. Elizabeth's mission of Stockholm to the status of self-supporting parish in 1920, with Father Soos as the first resident priest. About this time a new system of Church support was introduced to conform to the new regulations of the Archdiocese.

Parish dues for farmers were set at ten dollars for the first quarter section of land and five dollars for each additional quarter. Renters were to pay only five dollars for the first quarter. Home-owners who were not farmers, paid six dollars, artisans and labourers five dollars. It took time and trouble to put these rules into practice. Even as late as January 1923 at the annual meeting this matter was discussed and a resolution that the annual dues be uniform for each family, carried by majority vote. Their way of reasoning was: "The land does not go to church, it is the family that goes to church". However, at the next meeting, two weeks later, the resolution was reversed and the diocesan system was adopted, that church dues be levied according to the size of the farm land.



### **Four Hungarian Priests.**

Being the only Hungarian speaking priest in the diocese, Fr. Soos' services were eagerly sought by various groups of former compatriots. Besides Kaposvar he occasionally visited the groups in the Melville district (Cana, Saxon Hill, Otthon) and Arbury in the Markinch district. He found time and energy to build a church at Cana and took steps to supply these colonies with priests from their homeland.

In order to achieve the latter objective, he made a trip to Hungary in 1921 and succeeded in bringing two priests for the Regina Archdiocese: Father Theodore Blickhardt and Father Benjamin Csaki. The latter was soon appointed pastor of Arbury and missions south of Lestock, the former after a stay of six months in Stockholm was made parish priest of Kaposvar, serving also the above named three groups in the Melville region. Later in 1923 Fr. Soos helped two other priests, Father Rudolph Denk and Father Paul Santha to come to this country. His efforts in recruiting co-workers in the spiritual field, brought untold blessings that still persist for many Catholics of Hungarian origin.

In the fall of the same year, he had to face certain problems and difficulties. The Superior of the Sisters, Sister Lucy Vierkotten, died on November 6th, 1921 and he could not get a replacement from their Motherhouse. The economic crisis in the wake of collapsing agricultural prices considerably cut down the revenues of the Parish, School and Community Hall; consequently it was impossible to meet financial obligations arising from debts. The remaining Sister returned to the States, and the boarding school went out of existence. The debt on the school was \$4000 (owing to Magashegyi) and \$1500 on the parish to the Episcopal Corporation. Some of the parishioners, not seeing a way out of this situation, felt disappointed and the confidence of the people was at a low ebb.

It was at this juncture that Father Soos proved to be a man of vision and determination. He decided to secure a new order of Sisters for the Parish and, as the upkeep of a private school was out of the question, he explored the possibilities of a Roman Catholic Separate School.

### **Sisters of Social Service.**

He published an article in a Hungarian church magazine, describing the situation and the urgent need for Sisters. He soon received a favourable response from Sister Margaret Slachta, the Superior of the newly organized group of the Sisters of Social Service in Budapest. It was about the same time that an invitation from the

Hungarian Parish in Buffalo, N.Y. was received by her and she had already sent three members to the States. In the fall of 1923 the Superior of this group, Sister Paula Ronai, took time to visit Stockholm and other colonies in the province of Saskatchewan. She collected contributions to cover the expenses of the ocean passage for the Sisters who were to be assigned to work in the Stockholm Parish. She was cordially received in every community, but some people were puzzled about the name of the Sisters who were called "Szocialis Testverek" (Social Sisters). To them it sounded like "Socialist Nuns". They always resented the word with its connotation of Socialism and wondered whether the nuns in Hungary had joined that revolutionary movement. Christmas Eve 1923 witnessed the arrival of Sister Paula, accompanied by Sister Ida Horvath and Sister Julia Lampert, who were joyfully received by the people before Midnight Mass.

The next task was to establish a Separate School District. This plan was to be submitted to the Catholic ratepayers of the existing Stockholm Public School District. After the preliminary formalities had been complied with, a public meeting was called to decide the issue. The proposition, however, did not get a majority vote. The failure may have come from disagreements with the Pastor over parish affairs, not connected in any way with this issue. More likely, the opposing taxpayers were concerned over the increasing tax burden that a separate school would involve. In fact, after the formation of the new district their taxes went down and have been lower than the rates in the Public School District ever since.

Father Soos became somewhat tired and disillusioned in these hectic years and resigned his parish on New Year's day in 1924. He was considering this step for some time but had not come to a decision until he made sure that Father Denk, who arrived in the autumn of 1923, would accept an appointment as his successor. Thus the change over came about without a break in the administration of the Parish.

### **An Appreciation.**

Shortly after his resignation he was appointed by the Archbishop of Winnipeg to serve as chaplain in St. Joseph's Hospital and placed in charge of Hungarian Catholics of that city. Besides these duties he made regular visits to two small groups in the Riverton and Langruth districts, for whose immigration and settlement he was for the most part responsible and later built churches for them. He continued his literary activities and started a Hungarian weekly from which emerged the still existing "Kanadai Magyar Ujsag" (Canadian Hungarian News). He celebrated the golden jubilee of

his ordination to the priesthood in 1938. Six years later he retired to Langruth from where he served also the group at Riverton. He died in 1947 at the age of 83.

Throughout his life he was a man of vision, initiative and optimism. He planned and worked for the distant future with alert mind and determination. All of his parishioners could not catch up with his creative imagination, some of them could not understand nor appreciate him. However, the future events proved him to be in the right. Despite many cares, trials and considerable opposition his life was worth living. By the end of his long life he was granted the privilege of seeing his former work crowned with success, the difficulties vanquished and all turn out for the better.

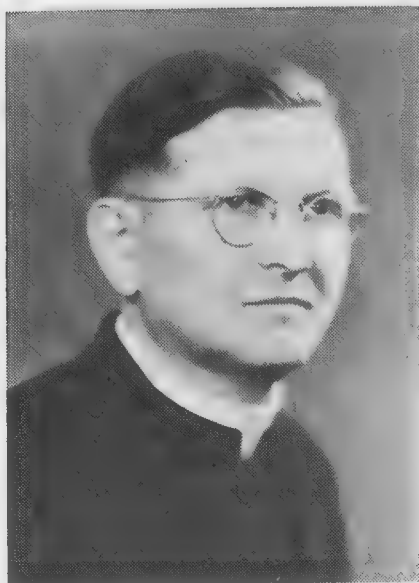
### **Father Denk.**

His successor, middle-aged Father Denk, could look back upon a career of many years of studies and pastoral experience in his own country. He was a studious spiritual character who had never given up the desire of joining a religious order.

He strived to do his best to reorganize the parish, introduced a formal oath to be taken by the councillors of the Parish, brought back some of the indifferent to the practice of their religion. It was during his administration that the Parish received from the Archbishop of Regina a relic of St. Stephen, the first King of Hungary, with accompanying document attesting to the authenticity of the relic. His work was followed with great hopes for the future. Unexpectedly in April 1924 he handed in his resignation to the Archbishop, expressing his long cherished intention to become a member of a religious order. After a few years as parish priest in the other dioceses, he was finally received in the Franciscan Order and spent his remaining years in their monastery in Washington, D.C.

**A  
CULTURAL  
AND  
SPIRITUAL  
CENTRE**

**(1924-1956)**



**Msgr. Paul Santha**

Soon after Father Denk's resignation a new Pastor was placed in charge by Archbishop Mathieu of Regina, in the person of Rev. Paul Santha, D.D., formerly of St. Joseph's Parish, Lestock. He preached his first sermon in Stockholm on "Good Shepherd" Sunday, May 4th, 1924. Since that date, that is, for the past 34 years, without interruption, he has been serving St. Elizabeth's Parish. He was also a visiting missionary to Regina until 1932.

His first concern was to restore confidence, harmony and co-operation. To this effect he had an annual statement of parish finances printed and distributed in January, 1925. He called a meeting of the parishioners to nominate new officials and councillors. The men elected were: Mike Estok, Alex Ivany, Mike Stadler.

**Events of 1925-1926. Parish debt paid.**

Several outstanding events make the two following years important. First in the order of occurrence was the visit of Rev Gaspar Lischerong, an eminent Jesuit missionary who preached a retreat to the faithful during the last week of October 1925. It was the first of its kind ever attempted among the Canadian Hungarians. He visited other groups in the West, thus bringing about a spiritual revival.

Another important event, the visit of Sister Margaret Slachta,

Superior General of the Sisters of Social Service, occurred about the same time. She visited many parishioners, attending meetings in the interests of a proposed Catholic school and established a permanent home for the Sisters. The convent was blessed on the feast of St. Scholastica, February 10th, 1926 by Most Rev. O. E. Mathieu, Archbishop of Regina, who always showed much good will for the community and the parish. It was an exceptionally mild weather with no snow on the ground. The people went in procession from the Church to the Convent where the ceremony was performed in the open. The Bishop paid a second visit to Stockholm that summer to administer confirmation to 120 children and adults.

Since a Catholic Separate School District had been organized the preceding fall, teaching commenced in the former parochial school building on February 3rd. This was and still is the only Separate school in the Hungarian colonies in Canada and has proved to be of great importance for the progress of the Parish. Teaching for the time being was done by lay teachers until 1933 when two members of the Sisters took over.

In June of the same year the Pastor attended the International Eucharistic Congress in Chicago where he met Bishop Stephen Hanauer, D.D., of Vac, Hungary. As a result of this the Bishop decided to visit the Hungarian speaking Catholic colonies in Western Canada, arriving in Stockholm on July 16th on a special train supplied in his honour by the Canadian Pacific Railway.

In 1927 the long overdue debt of the Parish to the Episcopal Corporation amounting to 3100 dollars was fully paid off. At a parish meeting 35 dollars were levied on each farmer. In this connection practically all the families were visited by the Pastor and councillors of the Parish. Because of the good results and in view of the colony's silver jubilee the Archbishop donated 500 dollars to the Parish. The jubilee celebration was dealt with in a preceding chapter.

### **New organizations and spiritual renewal. 1929-1931**

The following year seemed to pass without any public celebrations. Great progress was made, however, in the field of organizational work.

The first Sunday in July, being the anniversary of the blessing of the Jubilee banner, fourteen men were received into the recently organized Holy Name Society. The officials elected were Elmer Herperger, President; John Chelle, Secretary; Frank Shivak, Treasurer. Through the initiative of the Holy Name Society the Young Men's Club began its activities at the end of October. Steve Shivak became its first president. The Club generally met monthly, in

winter time more frequently, and was engaged in educational and recreational activities. Through the Club a new spirit was infused into the minds of the youth. The Women's Auxiliary which had been active since 1924 was formally reorganized.

The general economic crisis beginning in the fall of 1929 was a heavy blow on the economic well-being of the community. The sudden drop in the price of grain and the ensuing drought brought a number of farmers to the verge of ruin. It could be expected that this so-called depression would affect the spiritual life of the Parish. Divine Providence, however, did not allow a spiritual collapse along with the economic crisis. Religion and church were a source of strength and comfort during this period which with brief intervals lasted almost ten years. There were several events that kept up the spirits of the community.

In June 1931 Rev. Eugene Ecker, a Jesuit missionary from Hungary, preached a very fruitful retreat. Then he spent several weeks in the Parish, substituting for Father Santha, who went on a European trip for about four months. It was during the Pastor's absence that the new Archbishop of Regina, Most Rev. J. C. McGuigan, D.D. made his first visitation in Stockholm. On this occasion under the date of August 2nd he made the following entry in the book of visitations:

"We arrived on Saturday evening from St. Luke where the faithful of Stockholm came to meet us and were received by Rev. Eugene Ecker, S.J., acting Pastor in the absence of Rev. Paul Santha, D.D. We immediately made the solemn entry into the church according to the prescription of the Roman Pontifical and then briefly spoke to the people thanking them for their cordial welcome. We closed the evening service by Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament.

The following morning (Sunday) we said Holy Mass at 9 o'clock and gave Holy Communion to a number of the faithful. At 10 o'clock we vested in cope and mitre, solemnly entered the Church and gave our blessing. We then assisted at High Mass sung by Rev. Eugene Ecker, S.J. After Mass we questioned the children in their catechism and found them well instructed. We then spoke to the people reminding them of their duties to their children and explaining the influence played by the home, the Church and the School in the life of the child. We asked the people to support the Church in every possible way and commended the work of the Rev. Sisters and Rev. Paul Santha, D.D., the Pastor now absent in Hungary.

Rev. Eugene Ecker, S.J. interpreted our thoughts in the Hungarian language. Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament then was given. Hereupon we repaired to the Parish Hall where a reception was prepared for the Archbishop by the people. We replied to the kind greetings of the people insisting that they stand fast in the faith of

their Fathers and to carry on and give to their children the teachings of Holy Faith and noble traditions of faithfulness to Ecclesiastical authority which was characteristic of their forbears in the faith.

We found the books and everything in good order.

We beg God to bless and prosper this Parish and its good people”.

### **New Rectory. First Ordination. 1931-1936**

Father Santha during his stay in Hungary, on behalf of his parishioners, placed a wreath upon the grave of the “Unknown Soldier”. He submitted a report to Cardinal Seredi, Archbishop of Esztergom and Primate of Hungary, on conditions in Canada and asked for spiritual leaders for the Hungarian speaking groups. As a result four priests were sent to this country in the following years. Since then the Pastor has welcomed to his home newly arriving priests and seminarians and Canadian priests wishing to study the Hungarian language. Father Robert Koch was the first to come in 1932 to serve the Hungarians in Regina and several missions in the Archdiocese. At a later date Father Szollosy arrived in Montreal and two seminarians, Michael Vezzer and George Mayer, who were ordained to the priesthood in Regina. On the death of Father Blickhardt of the Kaposvar Parish on January 7th 1932, Father Santha was charged with the administration of Kaposvar which he carried for a whole year. In the meantime he took steps to call Father Joseph Vadas from the United States.

Early in 1932 Father Santha began to visit the mission of Cana in the Melville district and remained in charge for twenty years. During the depression years he was often invited by the Pastors of Hungarian groups to visit their people and preach spiritual retreats. The places visited were in Saskatchewan: Plunkett, Prud’homme, Wakaw, St. Benedict, St. Brieux, Spiritwood, Kipling. In Alberta: Calgary, Taber, Lethbridge, Leduc and several mining camps. In the East: Montreal, Toronto, Cornwall and Hamilton.

In 1924 and 1925 the old rectory building was occupied by the Sisters, so the Pastor stayed in a modest three room rented house. When the Sisters acquired a new home of their own, the Pastor moved to the Rectory. He found it unsatisfactory, however, and at the end of 1926 returned to the rented house where he lived until 1934.

The economic crisis was at its worst; yet, the year 1934 was one of the most successful years in the history of the Parish.

Since the Rectory was not in a condition to be remodelled into a comfortable and decent dwelling, it was decided to borrow money and build a new home in the modest size of 32 x 24, with eight



The new Rectory



The Rectory grounds



rooms and full basement. An application to the local Bank Branch for a loan of one thousand dollars was turned down by the head office. Consequently the only choice was to tear down the old structure and use the material. The contractor, Barney Peterson of Earl Grey arrived on May 28th, the birthday of Dionne quintuplets, to survey the site on a lot south of the church. Then the excavating work and the hauling of material began. The actual work was started on July 3rd. Because of the difficult times no money was borrowed and no levy was made on the people. Many of the parishioners contributed their work freely, the Women's League sponsored a successful bazaar. In this way the Parish with \$2932.00 constructed a rectory valued at \$4000.00 at the time. In the following years various installations and furniture were put in and with these it is worth twice the above amount at present. It is worth mentioning that the contractor's wages were \$4.00, and the paid carpenters' \$1.25 for a ten-hour day. In addition they received their meals free. To relieve the crowded conditions in the church the choir gallery was enlarged to accommodate the children and young people of the Parish.

On September 9th St. Elizabeth's Church was the scene of an event, first of its kind in the history of Canadian Hungarians. Most Rev. James C. McGuigan, Archbishop of Regina, who the year before on his European tour had visited Hungary, here ordained to the priesthood Michael Vezer, a student of the Regina Seminary. In attendance at the ordination were a number of priests, and Father Soos of Winnipeg preached the sermon. The newly ordained priest celebrated his first solemn Mass the following day and gave his blessing to the congregation. After ordination a cordial reception was prepared by the Parishioners for their beloved Archbishop and the new priest.

In 1935 an outstanding event in the social life of the Community was a celebration in honour of the 25th anniversary of the coronation of King George V. The Thanksgiving services were followed by a banquet and concert. On this occasion Dr. Christie, a pioneer medical doctor in this district, was invested with a coronation medal received in recognition of his services. During the summer a number of prominent people visited the colony. Of these we may mention Father Matthias Lani, the popular pastor of St. Stephen's Parish, Los Angeles and Fr. Bela Zsigovits of Hungary. The latter arrived here in the course of his round the world trip and preached a mission renewal. This was his second visit to Stockholm. He wrote a book on the impressions of his voyage.

On May 30, 1936 Cardinal Villeneuve, Archbishop of Quebec City, made his official visit in Regina and received an enthusiastic welcome from the Church and civic authorities. At a public reception

held in the Armories the representatives of various racial groups read illuminated addresses. The Hungarian group of the Archdiocese was represented by John Chelle, Jr. of the Stockholm Parish. In the fall Father Mayer was ordained to the priesthood in the Holy Rosary Cathedral of Regina and sang his first solemn Mass at Stockholm. A banquet was tendered in his honour, at which the neighbouring priests and a large number of people were present.

### **Eucharistic Congresses. Second Ordination. 1936-1941.**

In the fall of 1936 Rev. Paul Santha received from Justinian Cardinal Seredi, Primate of Hungary, the signal honour of representing the Hungarian Catholics at the International Eucharistic Congress to be held at Manila, Philippine Islands, in February of the following year. In connection with this commission His Holiness, Pope Pius XI appointed him a Papal Chamberlain with the title of Monsignor. The importance of this congress was heightened by the fact that the next congress was to be held at Budapest, capital of Hungary, in May 1938. While he was absent for five months, Father Mayer was left in charge of the Parish.

Msgr. Santha, sailing by Vancouver on the C.P.R. boat, Empress of Japan, called at Honolulu and ports of Japan and China. On his return journey he visited the missions in charge of Hungarian Jesuits in North China where he saw among others, Father Gaspar Lischerong, S.J. After reaching the American continent he visited several cities in the United States and met Bishop Louis Shvoy of Szekesfehervar, who was making arrangements for the participation of North American Catholics at the Congress in Budapest. The Bishop, unable to visit Canada, addressed a special message to the Hungarian speaking Catholics. Soon the Monsignor sent a detailed report of his observations at the Manila Congress to Cardinal Seredi and to the organizing committee. Over the following two years, he published in a series of articles a detailed account of his trip to the Orient under the title, "30,000 Miles on the Pacific Ocean". His return to Stockholm on May 23rd was greeted with great enthusiasm.

In June of the same year Father Lischerong, after a visit in the United States, arrived at Stockholm where he preached a seven-day mission. He, who preached the first retreat twelve years before, was received by the faithful with tears of joy. The mission was at the same time a spiritual preparation for the Eucharistic Congress and the St. Stephen Jubilee year in Hungary.

Although no one from Stockholm attended the Congress, the Parish took an active part in the arrangements for the gathering in so far as Stockholm was the centre of publicity, whence several

thousand pamphlets, leaflets and posters were forwarded throughout the Dominion.

A series of spiritual and social events made the year a memorable one. The feast of St. Stephen was celebrated with special religious and social functions. So was the feast of St. Emery, son of St. Stephen, when a solemn thanksgiving service was held for the return of the Northern Highlands to Hungary.

On June 29th the Pastor celebrated with his parishioners the silver anniversary of his ordination to the priesthood. Among the priests present were Father Medard Medveczky, O.F.M. of New York City, and Father Nicholas Horvath, O.M.C. of Montreal. It was recalled on this occasion that the Jubilarian was ordained by Cardinal Csernoch at Esztergom, Hungary on June 22nd, 1913, and prior to his coming to Canada he was on the staff of St. Emery's College, Budapest for six years.

Our modest church was, within the space of seven years, the scene of a second ordination to the priesthood. On July 6th, 1941 His Grace, J. P. Monahan, Archbishop of Regina, ordained Rev. Andrew A. Kulcsar, a native of Cana, a mission of Stockholm. He was the first Hungarian vocation to the priesthood in the Province of Saskatchewan. The parishioners were spiritually prepared for the event by a successful retreat preached by Father Denk, O.F.M., of Washington, D.C.

### **Glimpses of Stockholm**

To give some idea of the conditions and the way of life of the parishioners we may quote a few passages from an article written by the Pastor for an American monthly publication in 1943.

"This is a district of great open spaces and few good roads. What we call the town of Stockholm, is a mushroom-sized locality with a population of 240 surrounded by undulating prairie, dotted with groves of poplars, giving it an aspect of a park belt. Scattered in this park live the farmers engaged in raising wheat and livestock. My parishioners, about 130 families in number, form a solid and closed group around the town: uniform in race, language, rite and occupation, almost as if they were members of one large family. What we call roads are made of dirt, and as a rule only the highways have some gravel. When blown in by snow and flooded with water and mud in the rainy season, they may become almost impassable for cars.

To make the picture complete, I should tell you about the rigors of the long and severe winters. Very often the mercury hovers around zero, accompanied by howling winds. Occasionally it reaches 40 or 50 below, remaining thus for three weeks, as was the case

recently. July is the only frostless month and this may account for the saying that there are two seasons in the West: July and the remaining months of the year. Fortunately, we receive some compensations at the same time. The dry air and bright sunshine have a bracing, cheerful effect, and one is galvanized to greater activity than usual.

You may realize that under such conditions the parishioners have to put up with inconveniences, hardships and even with sacrifices when fulfilling their Sunday obligation or going to town on business trips. As for the children, it is no fun to walk a mile or two to school in the early hours of winter days.

No doubt, the vagaries of weather, the distances, plus bad roads may have an adverse effect on the attendance at Church, school, and social events, and in the latter case may cause disappointments and losses after spending days and weeks in preparation for an event. These, however, are exceptions only.

### **One heart, one soul on Sunday.**

In spite of these handicaps I seldom observed a keener sense of sociability and hospitality even in thickly populated centres than in this lonely land. Long and tiresome walks and trips on slow moving vehicles are undertaken in winter time just for the sake of making social contacts. In fact these people spend a considerable part of their time on the road—from farm to farm, to town, to school and to Church.

Their sociable disposition is most evident on Sundays and holy-days when the whole family (this may mean six or more persons) go to the Parish Church. Even the babies are taken along in the care of their mothers and these very frequently accompany the voice of the priest in the Chants of the Mass or inject their personal remarks into the sermon. I used to get distracted at first, but now I look at it as a matter of course and would greatly miss these interlocutors, should they be absent. These babbling babes recall to my mind the words of the Psalmist: Out of the mouths of infants and sucklings Thou hast perfected praise. (Ps. 8: 2). The people are very fond of congregational singing; the spirited rendering of hymns in their mother tongue gives more than anything else the impression of a family worship as it were "one heart and one soul". I see a great spiritual force in this practice seldom enjoyed by the faithful in city churches.

The neighborhood of the Church is densely jammed with vehicles of every description. Autos, trucks, horse teams, bicycles and horses present the picture of a camp at rest. Weather permitting, many of the people remain on after services and keep on chatting in front of the Church at least for a quarter of an hour.

Everybody knows everybody; they have so many common interests to discuss. It has often occurred to me that I might put up some benches for the convenience of this happy crowd. Several of them who have received Holy Communion, may have their first meal at 2 o'clock or later, but they don't seem to mind that.

The Cemetery is just a few feet from the Church as if the latter were part of God's acre. This arrangement, patterned after church yards on the older continent, has a practical purpose and a spiritual significance as well. Whoever comes to Church, cannot help remembering those forefathers who have gone before, and anyone holding their memory in respect cannot avoid the Church with indifference. In this way the bond of Charity which united the ancestors, reaches to the second and the following generations of believers, giving an assurance that the holy faith in this Community will endure". (St. Anthony's Catholic News, March, 1943).

### **The World War and post-War decade.**

In the early forties the parishioners took an active part in promoting the work of the Canadian Red Cross and after the war they did their utmost to help their former compatriots in Hungary. A number of social events were organized by the Parish for that purpose. Another objective was to raise a church building fund for a larger and better structure. The frame building constructed in 1905 deteriorated considerably and could not accommodate the growing Parish of 120 families. Apart from soliciting personal donations, various ways and means were devised to obtain funds. These were bazaars, raffles, suppers, and loaning out small sums of money (an average of ten dollars) to parishioners at a higher interest rate for the benefit of the fund.

Because of the small number of Hungarian speaking priests the Pastor had to make long trips to serve the spiritual needs in various parts of the country, especially in the diocese of Calgary and in Winnipeg. He preached the sermon at the first Mass of Father Stephen Molnar and at the ordination of Father Eugene Oroszkovits, and was delegated by the Archbishop of Winnipeg, Most Rev. G. Murray to bless St. Anthony's Hungarian Church in that city. He represented the Hungarians of Western Canada at the International Marian Congress in Ottawa, June 1947, accompanying Joseph Cardinal Mindszenty, who on his arrival sent him a special message calling him to Ottawa. For eight days during the Cardinal's visit he helped him to prepare his itinerary and accompanied him to cities in the East. The Cardinal planned to visit Stockholm but was unable to do so as he was unexpectedly called back to Hungary because of the tense situation there. When in Hamilton he sent a specially

written message through Msgr. Santha to the Hungarians in the West. This letter is one of the precious relics in possession of the Stockholm parish.

The first spiritual retreat after the war was preached in June 1947 by Father James Raile, S.J., one of the most popular preachers in the old country. As a recent arrival of a few weeks before, he was able to give a first hand account of the horrors of the war and of the invasion by Soviet Russia. He did admirable work for the spiritual welfare of the Parish.

The following year the Parishioners with their Pastor took a great interest in the Family Rosary Movement initiated by Father Peyton. They attended in large numbers the regional rally held at Melville in October 1948 and their Pastor was one of the speakers, representing the Hungarians of the region. When pledges were later taken, an overwhelming majority promised to recite the daily Family Rosary.

To mark the 50th anniversary of the construction of the first church a six day mission was preached by Father Francis Erdo O.D.B. before the feast of St. Elizabeth in 1955. This missionary had spent ten years in Japan and China and on his way to Europe he stopped over at Stockholm.



**St. Elizabeth's cemetery**

## Construction of a New Church

IN the course of time the church building constructed in 1905 became too small to accommodate all the parishioners. The number of families had risen to one hundred and twenty. For this reason a building fund for a new structure was started in 1935.

Eventually the Fund increased to such an amount that the Archbishop of Regina granted permission to the Pastor and people in the early spring of 1950 to build a new church. Plans for the building were drawn up by the architects, Ken Black and Grant Cumbers of Regina, aided by the Parish Priest and carried out by Carl Larson, building contractor, assisted by paid labor, for carpenters and bricklayers. A great number of parishioners volunteered to work without remuneration.

The first sod was turned on Pentecost Sunday and excavation completed about the end of June. The actual construction began on July 3rd and continued until November 17th. Then because of the cold and snow it was interrupted and the building remained without roof during the winter. It was resumed on April 30th, 1951. By June 18th, the day of the blessing of the cornerstone, the church was under roof and closed in with windows. An excerpt from the document drawn up in Latin and sealed in the stone records the time and circumstances of the celebration:

"In the year of Our Lord 1951, on the 18th day of June, during the Pontificate of Pope Pius XII, while Michael Cornelius O'Neill was Archbishop of Regina, and during the reign of King George VI, and Louis St. Laurent in office as Prime Minister of the Dominion of Canada, Thomas C. Douglas in the Province of Saskatchewan, this corner stone was blessed by the same Archbishop and placed here in the presence of a great number of priests and people for the greater glory of God, and for the salvation of souls and in memory of the benefactors: men, women, and young people who by money and labor and in a cheerful spirit helped to construct this church, and in testimony of our faith in Our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ who is our corner stone".

In the following months the work of finishing the interior advanced so far as to make it possible to move in the Altar and other essential furnishings from the old church.

The first Mass celebrated by the Pastor was without much solem-



**Building the new church. Winter 1950/51**



**Blessing of the Cornerstone. 1951**



nity, due to the winter weather. In the crowded church the parishioners saw, with tears of gratitude and joy, the fulfillment of their expectations on Sunday, January 13th, 1952, Feast of the Holy Family.

The dismantling of the old church was begun in the early part of March and was completed within ten days, thanks to the whole-hearted co-operation of the parishioners. From the auction sale of old lumber over two thousand dollars were realized.

During the summer the painting was completed, a terrazzo floor was put in the basement and the church grounds were levelled. In late fall the finishing job in the auditorium was done, mostly by volunteer labor. At the end of 1952 the total cost of church construction amounted to approximately seventy-five thousand dollars, with no outstanding debts.

In the Lenten season of 1953 the services were held in the auditorium, while in the church the floors were finished and new pews, accommodating four hundred worshippers, were installed. Also an artistic altar and communion rail were set up. By the end of Holy Week all was completed and the first Easter Vigil ceremonies and Midnight Mass were celebrated in the newly furnished Church. The new electric organ, purchased with the generous donations of twenty-one parishioners, was used the first time on this festive occasion.

### **Golden Jubilee. New furnishings.**

Several events made the observance of the Golden Jubilee of the Colony on Sunday, July 5th, 1953 a truly memorable date.

The new Church was dedicated with great solemnity by Archbishop M. C. O'Neill, fourteen priests and a representative gathering of more than a thousand people from six provinces attending. The thanksgiving Mass was offered by Father John Toth, S.J., a native son of the Parish, recently ordained to the priesthood. The occasion was also marked by two anniversaries of the Pastor, Monsignor Santha, who had been forty years in the ministry and thirty years in charge of Stockholm Parish.

Each year since this dedication new items have been added to the furnishings of the interior. In 1954 fourteen wood carvings representing Stations of the Cross were placed on the south and north walls of the Church. They were blessed by the Archbishop of Regina at the time of his visitation on July 5th, the first anniversary of the solemn dedication. Further acquisitions were: in 1955 statues of the Blessed Virgin Mary and Saint Elizabeth, a baptismal font, a trichair for the Celebrant, four stools for the servers, and two holy water fonts of marble. All these were designed by Bela



**The new Church**



**Interior of the church. Jan. 13, 1952**

Zoltvany and specially executed for the church. The stations and the statues were carved by the artist himself.

On October 23rd, 1956 an automatic electronic bell and chime system was installed. (The old bell was sold to the Parish of Fillmore, Sask.). When in full operation, it reproduces the musical effect of nine bronze bells. The sound covers an area of two and a half miles in diameter, but it may carry over far greater distances. The new system was set up to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the Noonday Angelus and the last Crusade under the leadership of the great Hungarian hero, Janos Hunyadi. It is worth recording that the installation was made on the very same day the uprising in Hungary began.

### **Description of the New Church**

The new St. Elizabeth Church was built on prominently high ground north west of and adjoining the village of Stockholm (approximately 1769 ft. above sea level).

It is a long, high walled, low roofed, brick, concrete and steel structure with a square tower rising from ground level approximately 14 feet above the roof at the south west corner of the building formed by the nave, sanctuary and sacristy. Its higher location and narrow windows give the church an impression of height and dignity. The main entrance faces east. Even at first glance it looks different. Some people might say: "It does not look like a church". But we may ask: What makes a church look like a church?

Its exterior is different from the traditional and commonplace churches, following in design the principles of contemporary architecture and using modern materials and methods. As a building it is functional, simple and Christo-centric; functional, in being spacious, adapted to liturgical functions and assuring practical lighting, heating and good acoustics; simple in its straight lines and its lack of unessential ornamentation; Christo-centric, because it places the architectural accent (tower) near what is liturgically the focal point of the structure, the sanctuary. Its somewhat severe appearance is mitigated by the color of the bricks, suggesting the shades of foliage in fall, and by the gold leaf design and inscription on the sandstone slab above the front door. On this slab a central cross is flanked by two heads of wheat, symbolizing Christ and the worshippers of the parish, who are wheat farmers. The Latin inscription is a traditional call to worship: Venite Adoremus (Come let us adore Him). The large window above the entrance also suggests Christ, the sun and light of the world.

The size of the building is 106 by 42, and of the tower 15 x 15. The seating capacity is 400 in the nave. Since there are two Masses



Interior of the new church

on Sunday, it may appear large, but consideration was given to occasions when there is only one service for the whole congregation.

Entering the church by the east door and passing through an outer porch we reach the vestibule from where stairs on the left lead to the spacious and sunlit choir gallery, furnished with a Hammond electric organ console and tone cabinet. Under the gallery at the left there is a wide open recess for the baptismal font, at the right is the "mothers' room" or "cry room".

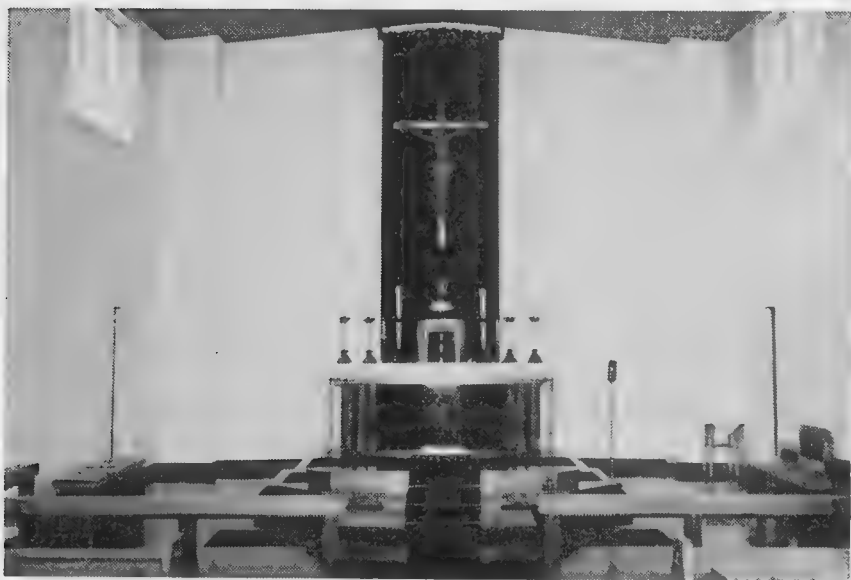
### **Interior furnishings.**

In the interior of the church our attention is immediately attracted by a large, hand-carved walnut crucifix on the opposite west wall above the altar, against the crimson velvet curtain. There are no posts or columns, and the altar is visible from every angle. The south and north walls of the nave are adorned by the fourteen stations of the cross, carved of the same material, slightly tinted and in a Christo-centric conception displaying the head of Christ alone or with one or two figures. This set of stations is one of the finest ever made in this country. Before reaching the sanctuary we notice the confessional built into a recess in the north wall, and in the opposite wall under the tower a special shrine for the Christmas Crib and Holy Week repository. Flanking the sanctuary are two mahogany statues in a natural shade, revealing the original material of which they are carved. They represent the Immaculate Heart of Mary and St. Elizabeth of Hungary, the patron saint of the parish.

While the light ash pews in the nave are in a blond finish, the sanctuary colour scheme forms a complete contrast. The dominant material of the sanctuary furnishings such as altar, sedilia, servers' stools, candle holders, is red mahogany alternating with birch of blue-grey and maple in blond color. It is the brightest spot, receiving its natural light through highly placed triple windows from both sides. As a result, the illumination of the sanctuary is never the same, it changes from day to day, from hour to hour. On an elevated platform three feet from the wall stands the simple, table-type altar. The tabernacle in the centre is in the form of a tent, containing a steel safe within, its exterior harmonizing with the sanctuary furnishings. On top there is an ornate royal crown which symbolizes the kingship of Christ. On the central support of the altar the same idea is expressed by the Greek initials of Christ with a palm branch, an emblem of victory, in the background. The ensemble conveys the idea of the suffering, dying but victorious King. The figure of the cross is remarkable in its portrayal of the



Interior of the new church



Sanctuary of the church

marks of suffering on the emaciated body, especially over the pierced heart. The crucifix being such an impressive piece of art, the church does not need a special Sacred Heart statue.

For the time being the walls are left in white natural plaster, the wainscoting in the nave, which reaches to the window sills, is in a darker shade contrasting with the walls and the lighter pews. The ceiling is of truss construction, its two fields meeting in an obtuse angle at the height of 20 feet, somewhat lower than that of the average church, thus conveying a homelike atmosphere. The donnacona along with the insulation material assures almost perfect acoustics, without using any amplifying system. There is an abundance of natural light in the sanctuary and choir gallery; less in the corners around the shrines and the confessional. Artificial illumination is obtained through flood lights placed in bell-like brass fixtures hanging from chains. The underlying purpose is functional lighting, to give sufficient light for the people to read their books, but leaving the ceiling dark. This installation produces a heart-warming effect on the congregation at the evening services. The building is heated by hot air which is forced through registers in the ceiling.

A large sacristy, adjoining the sanctuary on the south, is used by the priest and the servers. A small model of the church, made to scale by one of our young people, is displayed in the sacristy. Also the steel cabinet containing the mechanism of the electronic bell and chime system is placed here. On the north side there is a small store room.

The building has a full basement, 12 feet high. The greater part is occupied by a spacious auditorium with terrazzo flooring, including a stage, dressing rooms, kitchen and furnace room connected with the former by a steel door. Opposite the stage, on the entrance side are the projection room, check room and storage space.

### **Planning, Construction and Costs**

The church is the result of many months of planning and study by the architects, K. H. Black and G. Cumbers of Regina and by the Pastor of the Parish. The furnishings were designed by Bela Zoltvany, a prominent Montreal sculptor of Hungarian origin. These are as follows: the altar and its appointments, sanctuary rail, baptismal and holy water fonts, lighting fixtures and ornamental stone at the entrance. The statuary, together with the stations of the cross, is the personal work of the artist. Some of the stations were displayed at an Art Exhibition in Montreal and won deserved recognition. It is worthy of mention that on completing the last items of the furnishings, the artist passed away after a brief illness in early 1956. Carl Larson was contractor for the building, working

with a crew of paid labor from Esterhazy and with a great number of voluntary workers from our local parish. Sub-contractors were: R. Pilon of Melville for wiring, T. Edwards of Regina for sheet metal and heating, Blondin Co. of Regina for roofing, S. A. Swanson of Whitewood for plastering, Western Manufacturing Co. of Regina for millwork, L. Antonini of Regina for terrazzo and rubber tile. The altar and furnishings of the Sanctuary were made by Joseph Kovach of Montreal. The pews by the Globe Furniture Co. of Waterloo, Ont. The Hammond Organ and the electronic Bell and chime system were supplied and installed by Heintzman and Co. The steel tabernacle and lighting fixtures by Cassidy and Maillard of Montreal.

The cost of the complete building with all furnishings and installations including the electric organ, is in the neighbourhood of \$100,000. In addition, the value of free labour by the parishioners is estimated at least \$10,000. There was no church building committee in the accepted meaning of the term. The pastor was in complete charge of the planning, fund raising, ordering of material and supplies, directing of building operations; he was aided by the supervising architect and contractors. The parishioners gave their full support by donations of funds and free labour and they are worthy of every praise.

As the construction proceeded, all material and labor was paid for in cash, thus there has never been a debt on the building. It was a great advantage to have had the building fund started years ahead of the actual construction. By the end of 1949 the fund reached \$34,000. Moreover, the years 1950-1952 were a period of prosperity for the majority of the farmers, when they could afford larger contributions than usual. Fortunately the building was almost completed before we entered the wet cycle, and work progressed without time lost through the vagaries of unsettled weather. But above all, we owe our greatest thanks and gratitude to Divine Providence who granted inspiration, guidance and strength when most needed.

A word or two may be said about the location of the church and its environs since these form an integral part of the parish unit.

The church grounds proper (one acre) are connected by wide concrete stairs with the road that serves as parking space for a large number of cars. North of the church are the cemetery grounds of four acres; to the south the rectory stands on one acre of landscaped property and a ball field occupies two acres. Across the road to the east, the Catholic school and parish hall (called Community Hall) are located with approximately five acres of play grounds. Somewhat north east of the school is the Convent of the Sisters of Social Service. The total area of this land with buildings



thereon, serving cultural, social and religious purposes is approximately 17 acres.

### **Memorial Banner**

The account of the church furnishings would not be complete without mentioning its most precious relic of art, the handmade silver jubilee banner (size 57 in. x 75 in.).

The jubilee banner is actually two banners in one. One side represents St. Elizabeth of Hungary, the patron saint of the Stockholm Roman Catholic church and colony, with the Latin inscription: *Sta Elisabeth ora pro nobis* (St. Elizabeth pray for us).

On the other side is the Hungarian coat of arms with the words of dedication in the Hungarian language: *A stockholmi romai katholikus egyhaznak—az ohaza* (To the Roman Catholic parish of Stockholm—the Old Country) 1928.

In the corners of the banner are pictured the four patron saints of the country—the Blessed Virgin Mary, St. Stephen, St. Emery and St. Ladislaus.

The banner is bordered with gold fringes and four tassels which never lose their lustre. Shaded in a great variety of colors, it looks like needle painting, but there is no paint on it. The technique used was to change the material and needles many times.

A wide ribbon in Hungarian colors of red, white and green, with a dedication by the Hungarian minister of internal affairs embroidered in gold, is tied to the banner along with a white silk cord.

On the flag staff are fastened a number of miniature shields, engraved with the names of church and government leaders in Hungary and Canada and of the benefactors of the parish. They were driven into the staff at the dedication ceremony.

## VI.

# Events and Census of Year 1957

**T**HE last year of the period under review was one of the most eventful years in the history of the Parish. We confine ourselves to the main happenings which may be grouped under three headings.

### **Spiritual Life in the Parish.**

The further relaxation of the sacramental fast before Mass and Communion resulted in the introduction of evening Masses on numerous occasions, First Fridays, during Lent and the months of May and October, bringing about a greater attendance at the liturgical functions.

An elaborate Novena was held early in December as a follow-up to the Archdiocesan Vocation Week. The Sisters arranged a special display of Vocation material in Regina and Moose Jaw. A group of young people attended the Rally and Retreat day at Melville. A vocation essay contest was held for the students of the Diocese. The first prize for grade XII contestants was awarded to a boy of our Catholic school, who wrote on the subject of overseas missions.

### **Anniversary Celebrations.**

The golden anniversary of the blessing of the first church was celebrated on June 12th with a year's delay, however, because of the difficulty in making suitable arrangements for the exact date.

It was a triple celebration. The Archbishop of Regina administered the sacrament of Confirmation, then solemnly blessed the new organ and electronic carillon. Memorial plaques were placed on this occasion. On the organ console the wording is as follows:

This organ is dedicated to the glory of God and in loving memory of those Canadian men and women who made the supreme sacrifice in World Wars I and II.

And on the carillon console: The carillon in this church is dedicated to the glory of God and in grateful memory of the Hungarian men, women and children who laid down their lives for freedom in the uprising of 1956. Installed October 23rd, 1956.

The 750th anniversary of the death of St. Elizabeth of Hungary

was commemorated on November 19th with solemn High Mass in the forenoon and with the staging of a three-act play in Hungarian in the evening. The successful performance was presented again in Regina a few days later.

### **Works of Charity**

With the heavy influx of Hungarian refugees it was in the field of Christian charity that the greatest contributions were made by the Parish.

The refugees were met on their arrival in Regina and visited in the various Centres. The Sister Superior of the Stockholm convent spent many days with the group of families accommodated in Valley Centre, Sask. In the course of the year more than twenty persons were given temporary homes with families in the Parish. These and others in the country (many hundreds of them) were supplied with language books and other reading matter in their mother tongue. Steps were taken to place these people in jobs in and outside the district. Applications were made to the Immigration Department, sponsoring scores of persons in the matter of entry into Canada. The Parish proved to be one of the nerve centres furnishing even material help to a number of refugees here and still in Europe, and generously contributed to the Hungarian Relief Organization under the auspices of the Red Cross. The Pastor paid several visits to the south of the Province to bring spiritual comfort to refugees in the dioceses of Regina and Gravelbourg. Telegrams protesting against the bloody suppression of the uprising and deportations of young people were sent to various Governments.

Along with these works of mercy the social activities of the Parish went on as usual. We may mention several successful annual events, as the summer school of religion for the school children, bazaars, suppers, sports day, Mothers' day, Christmas concert and monthly meetings of organizations.

### **Other Activities**

By this time the installations and furnishings of the Church were completed, with no debt on them at all. Thus the Parish had many reasons for gratitude and thanksgiving. With this intention in mind the Pastor on behalf of the parishioners visited St. Ann's and other shrines in Quebec. His last visit to these shrines was made in 1949, just before the plans for the new church had been drawn up.

On his way home, he stopped off at Toronto where he was interviewed by the President of the Canadian Church Extension Society. A portion of this account as published in the Canadian Register sheds some light on the conditions in Stockholm.

"The Monsignor testifies that this is another of those hard years in the West. The crops were hit by drought in the growing season, rain at harvest time and in many sections the devastating menace of being hailed completely out of crop became a horrible reality. The farmers have been unable to sell their crop and consequently expenses have been going on but no money is coming in. He noted that fear of another depression or drought has made people put some funds away for the possible bad days ahead; but, he added, when a wedding comes along, apparently the saving father has to open up the family chest and blow the savings on the celebration.

He discussed a constantly recurring problem for the Catholics of his province, namely, what future will be presented to young people. Most young people grow up in the great out-of-doors with every desire to live out their lives building a mighty Canada on the broad acres of the freshest, newest country in the world. But King Wheat sits on his throne and already he is dispensing with men and installing the more gigantic and obedient servants, the robot combines which harvest and thresh with a minimum of human labor. So boys and girls have to surrender their wonderful prairie land and get themselves cooped up in some crowded city to earn a living".

Another important happening in the territory of the Parish was that the Archdiocese of Regina purchased the property of International Resort at Round Lake, fourteen miles south of Stockholm. The resort was named Camp O'Neill in honour of the present Archbishop of Regina. It comprises 22 acres, has half a mile waterfront and a structure with ten rooms. It will be used as a summer camp by the Catholics of the neighboring parishes.

According to the year end census the population of the Parish was 130 families (numbering 546 souls). There were 14 baptisms, 2 marriages, 5 funerals, 32 confirmations, 14,800 communions. The total active membership of associations is 122, a small, but working group. There were 81 school children receiving catechetical instruction, the great majority of them at school, others by means of the weekly Messenger magazine, copies of which were sent out by the teachers.

In the temporal field and administration the evaluation of strictly parish property (apart from convent and school) is as follows:

Replacement value of Church \$80,000; of moveable contents \$20,000.

Replacement value of Rectory \$12,000; of moveable contents \$4,000.

Replacement value of Hall \$6,000; of moveable contents \$800.

Replacement value of garage \$600. Value of land \$1,200.

Total receipts for the year were \$8323.59. Expenditures \$7472.46.

## VII.

# Organizations and Their Work

### THE SISTERS OF SOCIAL SERVICE



Sister Paula



Sister Ida



Sister Julia

**T**HE Society of the Sisters of Social Service is a religious organization of social workers approved by the Church. It was founded in Hungary in 1908 and adopted its present form in 1923 under the guidance of Sister Margaret Slachta. The Sisters wear a simple grey uniform and an emblem which represents the Holy Spirit in the form of a dove.

In 1923 Archbishop O. E. Mathieu of Regina invited the Sisters to Canada to keep alive the Catholic Faith among the immigrant settlers. There was great need for this work as there were few priests who could speak the language of the settlers from Hungary and Central Europe. It was Father Soos, resident pastor of St. Elizabeth's Parish at Stockholm, who first suggested that the Sisters of Social Service be requested to aid in the missionary work in Canada.

## **Arrival of Sisters at Stockholm**

On Christmas Eve in 1923 Sister Paula, Sister Ida and Sister Julia arrived at Stockholm from Budapest, Hungary. As a home for the Sisters the parishioners prepared the modest little frame building which had been formerly the rectory. It was here they welcomed the Sisters and eagerly listened to news from their Hungarian homeland, which they left a few years earlier. This poorly constructed and meagerly furnished building remained the Sisters' home for two years.

In April of 1924 Father Santha was appointed pastor of St. Elizabeth's Parish. At the same time he became the Spiritual Director of the Sisters at Stockholm. Under his leadership the Separate School District was organized in order to provide religious instruction for the children of the parish. He requested that the Sisters take up permanent residence and eventually take charge of the daily instruction in the Separate School. Thus, in 1926 the Sisters procured a permanent home close to the school.

Due to language difficulty the newly arrived Sisters could not fill teaching positions, even though they were qualified and experienced teachers in their native Hungary. The field of work at Stockholm included home visiting, organizing clubs for the ladies and youth of the parish, instructing children in Sunday classes in religion, conducting the Church choir and doing general parish work.

The ever increasing sphere of activities required more workers. In 1925 Sister Anna and Sister Klotild arrived from Europe, and in 1927 Sister Charlotte joined the little group at Stockholm. However, the latter two remained only two years. Sister Paula was transferred to the United States. On her departure in 1927 Sister Ida was appointed Superior of the Community.

In 1927 the first Canadian member of the Society, Sister Rita, joined the community and a Novitiate was opened for training new members. Since then the Society has expanded and carries on its work through Sisters trained in its Canadian Novitiate.

## **Summer School Activities**

The activities of the Sisters were not confined to Stockholm. In 1927 they began the Summer Vacation School for religious instruction. In the early years of this work they would spend two whole months in the distant colonies giving instruction in Christian Doctrine, preparing children for First Communion and for Confirmation, and acting as interpreters for the pastors not familiar with the language of the settlers. The production of plays, organization of church choirs and instruction of classes in needle work and handi-

craft were important features of the summer school program. In addition to this the Sisters did some visiting and aided many who sought their counsel in personal problems.

The Sisters also visited the new settlers who lived under primitive conditions far from school and church in the colonies of Mistatim, Middle Lake, Spiritwood and other points of Northern Saskatchewan. Here the Sisters would spend several weeks. Often they were obliged to share living quarters with the family as homes consisted of one-room dwellings. The classroom was a clearing in the forest, and the seats were tree stumps. In rainy weather the class would seek shelter in the chicken coop and continue its lessons there.

Since 1929 the Canadian members have participated in the summer school work. This made it possible to extend their activities to twenty-five different localities in the Prairie Provinces and Eastern Canada.

### **Progress and Expansion into New Centres**

The increase in members made necessary the extension of the Convent. In 1933 a large chapel and dormitory were added to the old building, and in 1941 a new wing was built.

The Sisters began teaching in the local Separate School in 1933. That same year they received a call from Montreal to carry on social work in one of the city parishes. Sister Mary, who had just completed a course in social work at the Catholic University of Washington, D.C., was entrusted with organizing the work in Montreal. Sisters from Stockholm were sent to assist with the new foundation. They worked first in a Settlement House, were engaged in teaching and helped to organize the Hungarian Parish. At present they do social work in Our Lady of Hungary Parish, and conduct a Day Nursery and Ladies' Hostel.

During the war years there was a shortage of teachers and the Sisters taught at Weissenberg School at Lemberg and at Pilchak School, just six miles north of Stockholm.

In 1942 the Sisters were invited to Toronto to help organize the parish of St. Elizabeth. Besides doing social work in the Parish the Sisters conduct a Ladies' Hostel in the city.

Since 1944 the Sisters are in charge of the Diocesan Retreat House in Hamilton. Here too, they did much to promote the development of a parish. At present the Sisters do social work in St. Stephen's Parish, conduct a Ladies' Hostel and organize the weekly retreats at Mount Cenacle.

The Sisters started work in Regina in 1949. Here they teach in the Separate Schools, do parish work and conduct a Kindergarten.



**Sisters' Convent**



**Sisters' Chapel**



The newest foundation of the Sisters was opened at Courtland, Ontario in 1950.

The missionary spirit of the Sisters of Social Service who ventured into this great and strange new land of Canada made a strong appeal to many of our Canadian young women. Thus it was possible to spread their activities from the humble prairie village of Stockholm to the great industrial centres of Eastern Canada.

### **Silver Jubilee in Canada**

On January 9, 1949 the Parish of St. Elizabeth gratefully acknowledged the many services the Sisters had rendered in the first twenty-five years of their work at Stockholm. The ladies of the Parish served a Jubilee Banquet at which the parishioners extended their greetings and gifts to the Sisters. Among the many letters and telegrams of congratulations received on this occasion is one from Archbishop O'Neill of Regina addressed to the Pastor, the Sisters and the Parishioners of St. Elizabeth. The following is an excerpt from his letter:

"...The Anniversary that you celebrate to-day commemorates an event that was the beginning of untold blessings for the Parish of St. Elizabeth. It marks the coming of the Sisters of Social Service, whose ideals and life work surely found their inspiration in the life of the patroness of your parish. The spirit of love, self-sacrifice, and the charity of Christ alone prompted such a community to come in your midst not for themselves, but solely that they could minister to your needs and those of your children.

No words of mine are needed to tell you what these services have meant. You can appreciate them far better than I. And yet I would be most ungrateful if I did not extend to the Sisters my own personal appreciation for all that they have done to help the spiritual and material welfare of so many, not only in your own parish but also in the Archdiocese of Regina. Their teaching, catechetical work and social welfare work have surely brought many of our people to a greater knowledge and love of God..."

There are six members stationed at Stockholm since the Novitiate and Canadian Province House were moved to Eastern Canada in 1953. The Sisters continue the work started by the pioneer members, but adapt their activities to the needs of the present.

### **THE STOCKHOLM CATHOLIC SCHOOL**

The Stockholm R. C. Separate School is located in the Saint Joseph subdivision of the village. The two storey brick veneer building with full basement was erected in 1917 to serve as a private

boarding school. It was in charge of two Carmelite Sisters, Sister Lucy and Sister Juliana, who had come to Stockholm from the United States in 1916 at the request of Father Soos. It was the plan of Sister Lucy to found a teaching branch of the Carmelites under the name of the "Schoolsisters of the Carmel", which would teach only in the poorest parochial schools. Teaching in Stockholm was her first venture, and even before the school was built, the two Sisters kept boarding students in the vacant parish rectory which served as their convent.

When the school was opened, pupils from many parts of Saskatchewan attended. Three of the students joined the community as aspirants. With the death of Sister Lucy in 1921, the school had to be closed, and the aspirants continued their religious formation in other religious communities. Sister Lucy lies interred in the parish cemetery.

The presence of the unused building on which taxes and a considerable amount of debt owing to the Archiepiscopal Corporation of Regina had to be paid, together with the existence of crowded conditions in the Stockholm Public School pointed to the advisability of the formation of the Separate School District. In November of 1925 a petition to the Department of Education by the Catholic ratepayers of the Stockholm Public School District for the organization of such was made.

On January 8, 1926, notification was received of an order erecting the Stockholm R. C. Separate S. D. No. 21. The first school trustees were John Chelle, Mike Estok, and Mike Stadler. Mr. James Robinson of Saltcoats, then Inspector of Schools, was consulted in all matters concerning the welfare of the school which opened on February 3, 1926. Mrs. Mary Baker of Dubuc was the first teacher, and the enrolment at the end of the first school term was fifty-seven.

The building was rented from the Archiepiscopal Corporation of Regina, permission to use it for school purposes having been obtained from the Department of Education. Finally, on July 5, 1945, at the School Board meeting at which His Grace, P. J. Monahan, Archbishop of Regina, was present, it was moved that the building be purchased. The special meeting of ratepayers held that month approved the purchase. The District was fortunate in obtaining a solidly constructed building with furnishings and installations at a very modest price.

In August of 1933, the Board made arrangements to open a second classroom. Teachers engaged were Sister Rita Kulcsar and Sister Sylvia Rakai, the first Canadian members of the Sisters of Social Service, members of which Society have staffed the school until the present time.

Besides those already mentioned, the following teachers have

taught in the school: Miss M. Zetta Fanset, Miss M. Hughes, Robert C. Smith, Joseph Trohak, John Estok, J. H. Schmidt, Sister Hildgarde Gaspar, Sister Bernarda Hido, Sister Blanda Barilla, Sister Gabriella Petoniak, Sister Philomena Orosz. Sister Rita Kulcsar has taught for the longest period of time.

Outstanding for their length of service on the School Board have been Mr. John Chelle who served for 25 years, and Father Santha who has acted as secretary ever since the first Board was organized. Other Board members have been: M. Drotar, Geo. Mario, Steve Molnar, V. Schaufert, Frank Shivak, Frank Seman, Steve Shivak and Louis Matsalla.

Among the High School graduates are numbered twenty-five teachers; four others have gone into nursing, three have taken commercial courses, and four have gone on to University.

Extra curricular activities carried on are varied. The High School students take part in non-competitive drama, oratory and debates. Special programs are presented four times yearly on the hall stage. Some part has been taken in track and field meets and curling competitions. The High School girls have for a term held the Superintendency softball championship.

Religion is taught regularly in the school and some students have won catechetical prizes in Diocesan contests. The children's choir, organized by the Sisters, contributes to church services. The School children belong to the Association of the Holy Childhood, the purpose of which is to aid children in overseas missions.

Since the Sisters have kept boarders in their convent, the school has had pupils from several points in Saskatchewan, and a few from Manitoba, Ontario and Quebec.

It was the teaching Sisters and Novices graduated from this school who were responsible for the building up of convents of the Sisters of Social Service in Regina, Hamilton, Toronto and Montreal, Stockholm being the cradle of the Canadian Sisters of Social Service.

## **THE WOMEN'S AUXILIARY**

The Catholic Women's Auxiliary of St. Elizabeth's Parish was first organized in 1924. From 1924 to 1928 meetings were held under the leadership of Sister Ida. The purpose of these meetings was to broaden the spiritual life and the cultural outlook of the members, and to provide opportunity for group work for charitable purposes.

In November of 1928 the Auxiliary was organized on a more formal basis and officers were elected. The first members of the executive were: President, Mrs. Steve Molnar; Vice-President, Mrs. Leslie Toth; Treasurer, Mrs. Andrew Kish. Sister Ida acted as

Secretary and Counselor of the Auxiliary till 1953, when her duties as a member of the Central Council of the Sisters of Social Service obliged her to take up residence in Eastern Canada. Since 1953 Sister Anna has held these offices. Monsignor Santha has been Spiritual Director of the Auxiliary from its very beginning. He has attended practically every meeting and has given advice and guidance to the group.

The monthly meetings have followed a general pattern. After the usual business of committee reports and outlining of future activities, the Counselor leads discussion on timely topics of cultural value. Spiritual values are also emphasized, and at each meeting a conference is given by the Spiritual Director. A social period precedes Benediction with which the meetings end.

At the time of formal organization in 1928 the membership was fifteen, but by the end of the year it had doubled. Down through the years the membership has been kept fairly constant at forty-eight, as new members take the place of those leaving the community.

### **Social Work**

The Auxiliary chose as its field of activity all works of charity, but especially, aiding the sick and the needy. In order to carry on these activities they decided to use every available means to raise funds. During the thirties the chief sources of revenue were elaborate banquets served three times a year and raffles. In the late thirties the Spring Bazaar with games for young and old, and sale of home-baking and handwork was introduced and became an annual event. In order to increase efficiency the members were organized into separate committees for serving lunch at different events. The members also promoted the Auxiliary's work by personal donations.

From the early days of 1924 the members helped by donating gifts to those who suffered loss of home by fire, or were destitute through other causes. On several occasions they redecorated the homes of elderly and ailing residents, and helped with their gardens.

In 1931 they actively participated in the diocesan relief drive for those suffering from drought in the southern regions of the province.

In 1932 a Committee was formed, which for several years provided religious and educational literature and occasional gifts for inmates of hospitals, old folks' homes, and penal institutions.

With the outbreak of war the Auxiliary immediately entered into Red Cross activities. First it worked in conjunction with the village branch, and after 1940 with the local Parish Unit. Throughout the war years the Auxiliary helped the Red Cross, bought war bonds,

and sent gift parcels to men in service overseas. In 1946 the aid to war victims of Central Europe became an activity of primary importance. Parcels of food and clothing, weighing 15-20 pounds were packed and sent to countless numbers suffering from the ravages of war.

### **Support of Church**

The financial support of the parish church has been one of the important functions of the Auxiliary. In 1933 funds were raised to make possible the extension of the choir gallery in the old church which was too small for the needs of the growing parish. In 1935 funds were donated towards the building and furnishing of the new rectory, and in 1936 the building fund for the new church was started. By various activities and through personal donations they were successful in raising over \$2300 towards this fund. In addition to this amount the Auxiliary donated over \$1400 towards the unique and artistic wood-carved Stations of the Cross and financed the acquisition of a piano for the Auditorium.

Besides supporting the local parish the Auxiliary has extended aid to Seminarians recently arrived from Hungary, and to needy students in the archdiocese of Regina.

In the field of missionary work it has helped the newly formed parishes in the undeveloped areas of Northern Saskatchewan. The Auxiliary has also aided the Church in the foreign lands by patronizing the Jesuit Missions in North China.

Besides the satisfaction that comes from working in harmony with others the members derive further benefits from the Auxiliary. Among the spiritual gains are the opportunities to share in the prayers and sacrifices offered for the members, the opportunity to attend conferences of religious character at the monthly meetings, and to participate in the annual retreats and occasional pilgrimages.

Cultural activities also form an important part of the Auxiliary's program. The members attend cooking classes conducted by the Sisters of Social Service, take part in drama, and attend lectures and discussions on health, family life, and current events.

Highlights in the history of the Auxiliary are the organization of activities and elaborate banquets for such outstanding events as Silver Jubilee of the Parish in 1928, the Ordination of Father Vezer in 1934 and Father Kulcsar in 1941, the blessing of the new church and the celebration of the Golden Jubilee of the parish in 1953.

Besides those already mentioned, the following members have held office in the Auxiliary:



**A group of the Women's Auxiliary**



**The church Choir. 1953**

President:

1946— Mrs. Andrew Banga

Vice-President:

1932—1934 Mrs. Victor Schaufert

1934—1946 Mrs. Andrew Banga

1946— Mrs. Julius Plosz

Treasurer:

1930—1935 Mrs. Bernard Saxon

1935—1941 Mrs. Frank Shivak

1941— Mrs. Mike Shivak

### Associations

The Girls' Club was the first to be organized in 1924. The Men's Holy Name Society came into being in 1929. The Young Men's Society started in the same year. In later years these two youth associations joined forces and are now known under the name of Catholic Youth Crusade. They hold monthly meetings at which subjects of spiritual and cultural importance are discussed, social and sports events and drama performances are prepared.

The parish choir under the leadership of the Sisters has been a great help in making church services more impressive. The Parish Hall (known as Community Hall) was under a separate executive and independent of the Parish for years; however, since 1924 it is under the same management. Formerly it was a scene of all social events, but after the construction of the new church and auditorium only the picture shows and a few youth socials are held there.

Until 1925 when the Catholic School District was organized, the Catholic children of the village and some from the surrounding rural area were taught in the Village Public School. About half of the Parish's school population is still enrolled in the other one room public schools. The most important of these are Pilchak, Excel, Luton and Wales schools in the North, and St. David and Swea schools in the South. At the time of this writing these and other schools in the South Melville Superintendency are still outside the Larger School Unit area.

## VIII.

# Appendix

### Various Items of Interest

Cheerful events remembered by the whole community were a number of wedding anniversary celebrations. The men and their wives privileged to celebrate their Golden Jubilee were:

Mike Bacsu, Mike Banga, Louis Bodnar, John Chelle (also diamond jubilee), John Czinku, John Drotar, John Husztak, Andrew Kish, Steve Koczka, John Schaufert, Steve Stadler, John Seman, Mike Szikora, George Toth (diamond jubilee). The following men celebrated their anniversary while in retirement at Abbotsford, B.C.: George Mario, Joe Schweitzer, Mike Stadler, Joe Zsomar.

Two men in the Community, William Persson and Peter Trohak received the Queen's Coronation medals in 1954 and a testimonial banquet was held in their honour. Peter Trohak and John Chelle, Jr. were reeves of the Rural Municipality and School trustees for many years.

An outstanding event in the lives of ethnic groups in the Stockholm district was the local celebration on the occasion of the Province's Golden Jubilee in 1955, in which the representatives of the Swedish and Hungarian colonies and of the village participated. It consisted of a colourful parade from the Community Hall to the Public School grounds where a well organized program in the open was enjoyed by one of the largest gatherings in the Village. On this occasion the idea of recording the history of the above groups of the larger Stockholm Community was launched by the presiding Overseer, Wm. Persson. This book is part of the contemplated project.

Occurrences of a sad character were several sudden and tragic deaths of people who passed away because of accidents, as John Drozda, Joe Drotar, Joe Poncsak, Steve Seman, Lawrence Shvak, Andrew Janyu. Of the first settlers John Husztak and wife died and were buried on the same day.



## A Summary of Events

- 1901—**  
Nov. 9—First settler and family (3 souls) in the Stockholm district.
- 1902—**  
Four families (11 souls).
- 1903—**  
18 families (75 souls).
- 1904—**  
In fall First Mass by Fr. Pirot in the home of Joe Kurucz.  
15 families (70 souls)
- 1905—**  
7 families (18 souls).  
Mission of Stockholm organized.  
Summer: Construction of first church.  
Dec. 26. First Mass in church.
- 1906—**  
June 12. Blessing of church and bell.  
First Confirmation by Archbishop Langevin.
- 1911—**  
Construction of a rectory by Fr. Pirot.
- 1915—**  
Jan. 11. First visit to Stockholm of Father Soos.
- 1916—**  
Arrival of two Carmelite Sisters.
- 1917—**  
June 29. Laying of cornerstone for school.
- 1919—**  
Construction of Parish Hall.
- 1920—**  
Stockholm organized as Parish with resident priest.
- 1921—**  
Visit of Pastor in Hungary.
- 1923—**  
Arrival of Father Denk.  
Dec. 24. Arrival of three Sisters of Social Service.
- 1924—**  
May 4. First sermon of Father Santha.
- 1925—**  
October (last week). First mission by Fr. Lischerong.
- 1926—**  
Feb. 3. Opening of the R. C. Separate School.  
Feb. 10. Blessing of convent by Archbishop Mathieu.  
July 16-19. Visit of Bishop Hanauer of Vac, Hungary.
- 1927—**  
The Parish debt was settled.
- 1928—**  
July 7. Arrival of Bishop Mikes of Szombathely, Hungary.  
July 8-9. Silver Jubilee of the Colony.
- 1929—**  
July (1st Sunday). Organization of Holy Name Society  
Young Men's Club.  
Reorganization of Women's Auxiliary.
- 1931—**  
Mission preached by Father Ecker.  
Visit of Pastor in Hungary.  
Aug. 2. The first visitation by Archbishop J. C. McGuigan.
- 1932—**  
Jan. 7. Fr. Santha administrator for Kaposvar and Cana.
- 1934—**  
May 28. Final plans made for new rectory.  
July 3. Excavation work starts.  
Sept. 9. Ordination of Fr. Vezér to priesthood by Archbishop McGuigan.
- 1937—**  
Feb. Pastor represents Hungary at the E. h. Congress at Manila.
- 1938—**  
June 29. Silver Jubilee of priesthood of Pastor.
- 1941—**  
July 6. Ordination of Fr. Kulcsar to the priesthood by Archbishop Monahan.
- 1947—**  
June. Pastor accompanies Card. Mindszenty at the Marian Congress.
- 1948—**  
October. Family Rosary Crusade and pledges.
- 1949—**  
Dec. Plans made for a new church.
- 1950—**  
Pentecost Sunday. Turning of the first sod.  
July 3. Actual construction begins.
- 1951—**  
June 18. Laying of cornerstone by Archbishop O'Neill.
- 1952—**  
Jan. 13. First Mass in the new church.
- 1953—**  
New electric organ.  
First Easter Vigil.  
July 5. Golden anniversary of Colony and Blessing of the New Church by Archbishop O'Neill.

**1954—**

July 5. Blessing of the Stations.

**1955—**

Nov. 19. Golden anniversary of  
Stockholm Mission.

**1956—**

October 23. Chrono Bell and chime  
system installed.

**1957—**

June 12. Golden anniversary celebra-  
tion.

Solemn blessing of organ and  
carillon.

Nov. 19.— 750th anniversary cele-  
bration honouring St. Elizabeth.

**Summary:** Baptisms 793, Marriages 247, Funerals 269. Present status (end  
of 1957): 130 families (546 souls).

### **Vocations from the Parish and the Mission of Cana.**

#### **Priests—**

Rev. Michael Vezer

Rev. George Mayer

Rev. Andrew Kulcsar

Rev. John Toth, S.J.

(born in the Parish)

#### **Sisters—**

Sister Elizabeth (Trohak)

Sister Gabriela (Trohak)

Sister Anna (Trohak)

Sister Rita (Kulcsar)

Sister Juliana (Barilla)

Sister John (Barilla)

Sister Stephen (Barilla)

Sister Blanda (Barilla)

Sister Rhoda (Barilla)



### **In the Armed Forces during World War II:**

Robert Chelle, William Drotar, Joseph Estok, Joseph Gera, Edward Hanis,  
Andrew Kada, Joseph Korodi, Steve Molnar, Joseph Molnar, John Molnar, Will-  
iam Stang, Joseph Szumutku, Steve Tarcali, Bernard Toth.

### **Graduates from our schools:**

Madeline Antalfi, Violet Drotar, Lawrence Drozda, Kenneth Drozda, John  
Estok, Joseph Herperger, Alfred Herperger, Madeline Jacob, Joseph Jacob, John  
Persson, Wilfred Plosz, Helen Reit, Agnes Reit, Donna Romanchuk, Dolores  
Schaufert, Lorraine Schweitzer, Janice Schweitzer, Robert Shivak, Velma Stadler,  
Joseph Trohak, John Zupko, Mary Zupko, Joyce Bodnar, and others not of this  
Parish.

### **Members of the Parish Committee up to 1957:**

Mike Bacsu, Andrew Banga, Steve Banga, John Bodnar, Louis Bodnar, Meny-  
hert Drotar, Mike Estok, Elmer Herperger, Elek Ivanyi, Steve Kaczur, Andrew  
Kish, John Koczka, George Mario, Steve Orosz, Joseph Revesz, Victor Schaufert,  
Frank Seman, Albert Shivak, Alex Shivak, Frank Shivak, John Shivak, Mike  
Shivak, Nicholas Shivak, Mike Stadler, Mike Trohak, Peter Trohak, Andrew  
Yanyu, James Yanyu.

## LIST OF SETTLERS AND RESIDENTS

in St. Elizabeth's Parish, Stockholm, Sask.

### In 1901—

Drotar John

### In 1902—

Biro Steve  
Diosi Paul  
Kish Andrew  
Kurucz Joe Sr.  
Revesz Joe

### In 1903—

Babics Steve  
Banga Mike  
Bodnar Louis  
Bunyak Andrew  
Drotar Menyhert  
Herman Mike  
Kaczur Steve Sr.  
Koczka Steve  
Mario George  
Patrick John  
Pilcsak George  
Potyok Steve  
Schaufert John  
Schaufert Mike  
Shivak John  
Stadler Steve  
Stumphausen Steve  
Trohak Mike  
Yanyu Andrew Sr.

### In 1904—

Bacsu Mike  
Bomberak Steve  
Budahazy John  
Chelle John Sr.  
Czinku John  
Hegedus Mike  
Herperger Matthias  
Husztak John  
Hornyak Paul  
Kertesz Emery  
Milics George  
Oyka Steve Sr.  
Riczu John  
Saxon Bert  
Smerekowsky Steve

### In 1905—

Bunyak John  
Estok Mike Sr.  
Magashegyi Joe  
Orosz Emery  
Poncsak Steve  
Potyok Alex

Stadler Mike  
Stumphausen Matthias  
Vah Steve  
Yanyu Andrew Jr.  
Yanyu Emery

### After 1905 to 1918—

Banga Steve  
Balogh Mike  
Biro Peter  
Chigi Anselm  
Chomos Mike  
Danku John  
Daroczky Alex  
Dolezsar Steve  
Drozda John  
Fazekas Balazs  
Herperger Leslie  
Herperger Elmer  
Husztak Emery  
Husztak John  
Holhauser John  
Hanis John  
Ivanyi Alex  
Kada Steve  
Kriba Leslie  
Kulcsar John  
Kish Joe  
Lisik Steve  
Miskolczi Frank  
Molnar Steve  
Makkai Joe  
Nagy Steve  
Orosz Steve  
Pilesak Nicholas  
Ratti Joe  
Romanchuk William  
Rusznak Mike  
Szeman John  
Shivak Louis  
Shivak Frank  
Stadler Frank  
Schweyda Tony  
Schweitzer Joe  
Szekely Joe  
Szikora Mike  
Szenes John  
Szumutku Frank  
Szumutku John  
Tarcali Steve  
Toth Joe  
Toth Andrew

Toth George  
Tamas William  
Toth John  
Veres Steve  
Zsomar Joe

### After 1918—

Antalfi Steve  
Babyak George  
Bali Joe  
Beres John  
Bozsik Leslie  
Estok Frank  
Fekete Frank  
Helmeczi John  
Jakab Dezso  
Kapin Nicholas  
Kish Joe  
Kish Andrew  
Korodi Joe  
Kozma Steve  
Matsalla Louis  
Nagy Gabriel  
Persson W. S., Mrs.  
Pilchak William  
Plosz Julius  
Pinke Emery  
Shivak Steve  
Stang William  
Szumutku Emery  
Szumutku Laddie  
Szalai Louis  
Toth Andrew  
Toth Steve  
Toth John  
Terepoczky Mike  
Vendry Benny  
Zambal Louis  
Zupko Nicholas

### After 1945—

Abday Kalman  
Bacsu Emery  
Balogh Charles  
Clarey Frank  
Dubitz John Mrs.  
Fejes Martin  
Hildebrandt Otto  
Mihalicz Ellis  
McDougall Cliff  
Nelson G., Mrs.  
Stadler Mike Jr.  
Ziegler Mike

## A LETTER BY CARDINAL MINDSZENTY

A letter in the Hungarian language by His Eminence, Joseph Cardinal Mindszenty to the parishioners of Stockholm, on the occasion of his visit to the Marian Congress at Ottawa. Dated Hamilton, Ont., June 27, 1947.

**Kedves Nyugatkanadai Hívek!  
Magyar Testvéreim!**

Ugy vagyok meglátogatásokkal, mint a nemzetek apostola a filippiekkel. Ezek álltak szívéhez legközelebb; szeretettel és hűséggel ragaszkodtak hozzá, Epafróditust küldték köszöntésére. De az apostol nem mehetett vágya szerint Filippi városába, mert a bilincsek nem engedték.

Nekem eddigelé nem osztályrészem az, ami Szent Pált a látogatásban akadályozta. De a jelenvaló viszontagságok is a Duna, Tisza táján akadályozó nehéz kötélekek. Ezer és ezer kötelék sürget haza. Pedig tanum az Isten, mennyire vágyódom utánatok (Fil. 1, 8). A felöletek érkezett értesülések szerint a messze idegenben örömem és koronám vagytok (Fil. 4, 2).

Ha már nem nézhetünk egymásnak a beszédes ajaknál többet mondó szemébe; ha már nem szólhatok élőszóval édes anyátokról, a drága magyar hazáról, legalább írásban rögzítem le nektek, hogy hazánkat a történelmi balszerencse, a világon uralkodó igazságtalanság, a saját vakságunk és értetlenségünk hét részre darabolta, a holt-eleven tagokra irtózatot rakott. Nem számított az 1050 éves történelmi, a legszebb földrajzi és gazdasági egység, nem törődtek a magyar népnek a vérrel való, Nyugat-védő szerepével, magasabb műveltségével. Bánatra bánat jött a mi körünkben (Fil. 2, 27).

Vannak, Istennek hála, vigasztalásaink is. Kivülről a hitben testvérek nagyban segítik szűkölködőinket. A katolikus hitélet és öntudat legszebb példáit szemlélhetjük a nehéz időkben.

Arra kérlek benneteket, kedves magyar véreim, álljatok erősen a szent hitben, reményben és egymás testvéri szeretetében. Főként a családi élet legyen tiszta, fedhetetlen, a názáreti szent család és az első magyar szent család, szent István családi életének példájára. A családi élet legyen hű az oltárhoz és a szülőföld kedves templomához, iskolájának tanításához és az otthoni temetőben pihenő, porladó ősök szelleméhez.

Az igazság dolgában kifogástalanul éljete (Fil. 3, 6). És az Istennek az a békéje, amely meghalad minden értelmet, megőrzi szíveteket és elméteket Jézus Krisztusban. Ami csak igaz, ami csak tisztességes, ami csak igazságos, ami csak szent, ami csak szeretetreméltó, ami csak dicséretes, erényes, magasztos: arra irányuljanak gondolataitok. Ezt cselekedjétek; és a békesség Istene veletek leszen (Fil. 4, 9).

Ezekkel a Szentírásból meritett, szívemből jött intelmekkel adom rátok áldásomat, amely vezessen kedves mindnyájatokat földi és örök boldogulásra.

Hagyományaitokat, szent értékeket megőrizve imádkozzatok a család kebelében és a hívő közösségben a Nagyszennyhez a szenvedő Magyarországiért!

Hamilton, 1947. Szent László király ünnepén.

**Mindszenty József s.k.  
bíboros, hercegprimás,  
esztergomi érsek.**

DEO GRATIAS





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